THE PLAYSTATION 3 MAGAZINE

PSM3

March 2007
Issue 85 £3.99
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PlayStation 3 | PlaySt PSP

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REVIEWED!

Test Drive Unlimited
Virtua Fighter 5
Chili Con Carnage
Virtua Tennis 3
Formula One PS3
Ghost Rider
Rocky Balboa

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PSM3 Start

"The death, birth and rebirth of PS3"

To be honest, we've lost track of the number of times Sony have delayed PS3. It feels like *years* since we saw that epic – and, it turns out, quite false – 'in-game' footage of *Killzone*, but right now, with 35 days and counting to PS3's UK launch... it's made a light year of difference. £425? Expensive, but tolerable. March 23? Delighted – we secretly feared it might slip to September. The games? Good(ish)... but they're going to be *great*. Take a look at our cover game, *Stranglehold*, on page 20 to see why we're so upbeat – and why *Killzone* may not be as far-fetched as it first appeared. We're at the start of an exciting journey and a bold new beginning for PSM3. If you'd be good enough to join us over the page, we'll take the first step...

Daniel Dawkins Editor
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

In the making of this issue of PSM3...
93 dire 'Woo' puns
10 *GT* cars thrashed
One confirmed PS3 Euro launch date
& one big sigh of relief

The PSM3 Promise

The sharpest opinions
Every bit of the magazine is dedicated to giving you more information. If we're worried that a feature in a game isn't working, we'll not only tell you about it, but we'll have a word with the developer too.

The biggest games
Fact is, if a game makes it into the pages of PSM3 then it's something worth knowing about. PSM3 says no to lazy page fillers and boring 'me too' games.

The richest detail
We finish every game we review. Our secrets are the result of us playing the game and finding them ourselves. We've got what you want to know and tell you how you want to hear it.

The most committed videogame mag team
The PSM3 team live and breathe PlayStation. There's no game we haven't played and there's no end to our quest for knowledge and gaming greatness.

The best DVD action
We've got the best DVD in the business. We cram it with the best PS3, PS2 and PSP games each and every month. For free.

Three to read first...

"PS3 is coming. March 23. £425. We're already mentally queuing"

PS3 is almost here – page 10 has all the vital info you need.

"A worthy heir to *Battlefield*'s crown?"

Frontlines: Fuels Of War – page 47

"Smooth. 1080p. Drift mode. So just how excited should you be?"

We tackle **GT HD: Concept** – page 80

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The PlayStation 3 Magazine

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An exclusive look at this epic, bullet-strewn, Woo-approved shooter. COVER FEATURE

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Featuring challenges, winners, play PSM3 and your incredible gaming feats.

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An exclusive hands-on with this futuristic war game from the creators of *Battlefield*. SPECIAL FEATURE

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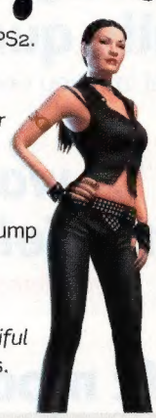
Ten reasons why *Okami* is the best painting-wolf-affects-nature game on PS2.



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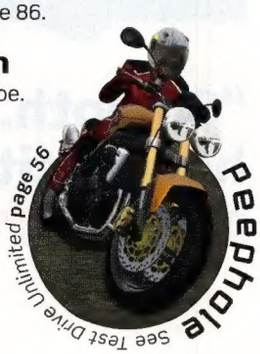
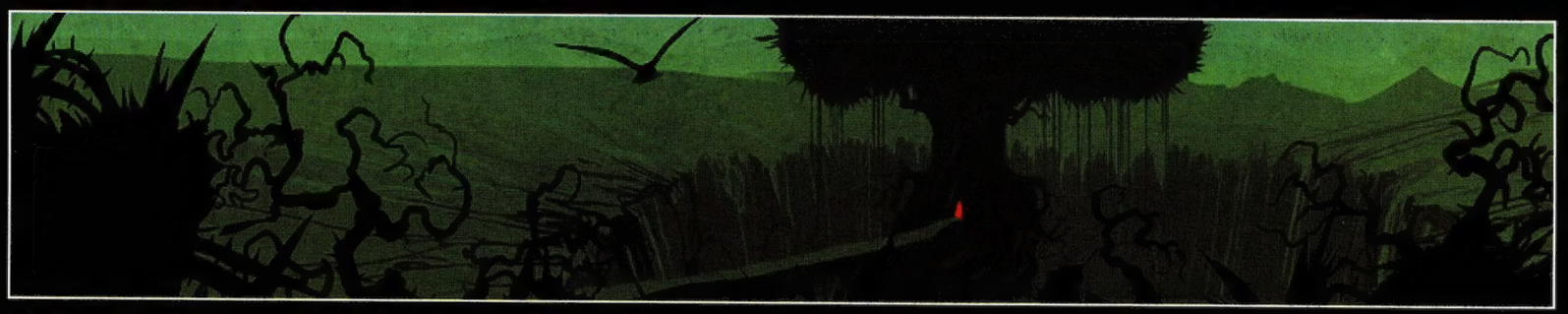


See Test Drive Unlimited page 56

"Perhaps the ultimate fighting game..."
So why is **Virtua Fighter 5** so difficult to adore? See page 64...

A WORLD HANGS IN THE BALANCE.



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On this month's DVD

DVD Highlights Packed with the latest PS3, PS2 and PSP videos

THE PLAYSTATION 3 MAGAZINE
PSM3 DVD
Over two hours of PlayStation 3, P video
FINAL FANTASY VS XIII
Movie-quality action from PS3's RPG epic
15
TOMB RAIDER ANNIVERSARY
See stunning in-game footage of Lara's miracle makeover
FEATURING Warhawk | Gran Turismo 5 | Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2 | TNA Impact
Virtua Fighter 5 | Dark Sector | The Shield | MotorStorm | Resistance | NFS Carbon | And more

Tomb Raider Anniversary

It's Lara's original PSone adventure – which debuted on Sega's ill-fated Saturn console – remade using the power of PS2. The dinosaurs, cogs and puzzles are intact, but, visually, it's in a different class.

Final Fantasy Versus XIII

Not a tie-in between *FF* and *XIII* the cel-shaded shooter (though we'd have like that – eat lead, Sephiroth). Instead, it's an 'alternate tale' set in the *FFXIII* universe. Take a look.

Gran Turismo 5

See the shiniest cars in the world drive around some outrageously detailed landscapes and marvel at what PS3 can do – the Eiger backdrop looks like a photograph, while pedestrians are full 3D.

Virtua Fighter 5

Watch our trailer for Sega's gorgeous scrapper – reviewed on page 64 – and marvel at the intricate animation. And, yes, it looks twice as good in crisp 720p HD. It's time to get a new TV. Fact.

+ Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2 | **NBA Street Homecourt** | TNA Impact | **Untold Legends** | Harker | **The Shield** | Okami | **Pimp My Ride** | Full Auto 2 | **More**

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Frontline

Hard news, all PlayStation action

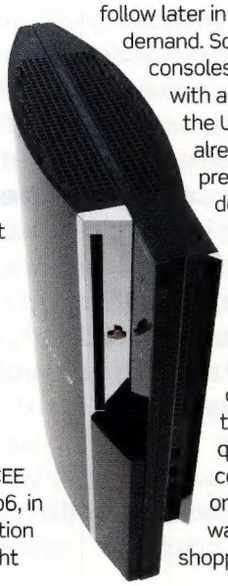
PS3 INVADES UK

The wait is over – PS3 hits the UK on March 23

Sony's console debuts at £425 with 30 games... but why should you get one? And where do you get the best deal?

Sony's console is hitting the UK on March 23 for £425 – two delays, 22 months and several million words of speculation after it was first announced at the E3 games show in May 2005. It's been the most troubled console launch in history, as much due to the fervent internet backlash as the strength of emerging rival Microsoft, but now Sony's undoubtedly powerful console is finally here, what does it mean for UK gamers? And how can you guarantee to get yours?

Only the 60GB version of the console will be available at launch, priced at £425 – as predicted by SCEE UK MD Ray Maguire back in May 2006, in a perhaps shrewd piece of expectation management. The 20GB model might follow later in the year depending on demand. Sony is shipping out one million consoles for the European launch, with around 230,000 earmarked for the UK market. Retailers are already scrabbling for stock and predicting major supply and demand issues. Amazon's console and videogames boss James Schall explains: "No matter what number Sony decide to give us out of that one million, it won't be enough to supply for the demand out there. Our aim is to ensure customers aren't queuing and fighting in the cold, waiting to get their hands on units that don't exist. We want to provide a hassle-free shopping experience for the massive number of customers we're expecting to buy the PS3 from Amazon."



Exchange rate woe

As usual, the UK gets the brown end of the stick, with a 60Gb machine costing £207 in Japan and £270 in the US, compared to £425 in the UK. On the bright side, Sony are working on a new low-cost Cell chip, facilitating a potential price drop by late 2007/

With so few PS3s to go round, virtually all – if not every single one of – the consoles available in high street stores will already have been allocated through pre-orders, so the chances of you snatching a PS3 off the shelf on March 23 are anorexic to none. The message is clear: if you want to get hold of a PS3 on launch day you'd better pre-order, and you'd better do it yesterday.

The other big issue raised by the launch announcement was PS3's price. With a 20GB Xbox 360 retailing for £279.99, it's a hefty price difference to a £425 PS3, although that does buy you a 60GB hard drive, Blu-ray player and an – arguably – technically superior machine. Retailers are confident that, no matter the concerns over price and regardless of the carping from industry analysts and Xbox flag-

ON THE DISC
See the latest PS3 movies on the disc now

London calling We're not sure how the PS3 allocation will be split between regions yet.

wavers, demand for PS3 will soar. Tim Ellis, head of games at HMV, explains: "Obviously, it's quite a high threshold, which may or may not prove an issue, particularly among non-core PlayStation fans. But then it's also the case that PS3 is more than just a games console. Gamers already know this and I'm sure will respond accordingly."

If past experience can be counted, it seems certain that after the initial launch madness has settled, gamers will continue to buy PS3s as quickly as Sony can make them. One thing is clear, though – with Xbox 360 a cheaper alternative, with almost the same line up of games, Sony have to shift their focus away from 'brand engineering' – see their 3 Rooms project on page 100 – and focus on what they do best, encouraging the world's developers to make exclusive, or superior, games on their new console.

Advice How can I get a PS3 on launch day?

Want a PS3 from day one? (Offers as of 1/2/07 – check websites for updates)

Pre-order advice

Forget queuing – you have to pre-order from a specialist retailer, like Game, Currys Digital, Gamestation or a major website like play.com, amazon.co.uk and so on. As you read, it *might* already be too late, but check company websites and register your interest immediately. If that fails, it may be best to visit or ring your local game store direct – they'll have a better idea of how much stock they'll receive, and might be able to point you in the direction of another store who are expecting more. If all else fails you could try bidding site ebay – but beware rip-off merchants.

Who are taking pre-orders?

Store	Website	Taking pre-orders?	Price?	What you get
amazon.com	www.amazon.co.uk	No	N/A	N/A
ePlay	www.eplay.co.uk	Yes	£150 deposit (Full Cost TBC, approx £550) - bundle only	Two games (TBC) and guaranteed PS3 on day one
GAME	www.game.co.uk	No	N/A	N/A
gamestation	www.gamestation.co.uk	No	N/A	N/A
PLAY.COM	www.play.com	Yes	£549 for bundle	Formula One 06/ Genji/Resistance + free delivery

ON THE DISC
See the PS3 launch line up on DVD right now

PS2 PLAYTEST

Full launch list, plus best five games revealed

Strong overall quality... but no killer application. Yet.

There are over 30 games available from day one – an impressive figure. President Of SCEE, David Reeves claims, "To be able to launch with over 30 titles across every genre shows that this is our strongest launch line-up in the history of PlayStation, and is what PlayStation fans in Europe have been crying out for." Best launch line-up ever? Certainly in terms of breadth and overall quality (there are a lot of solid 80%+ scoring games), but to be brutal, not one game, bar perhaps *MotorStorm* and *Resistance*, is absolutely essential, or console-defining. The wait for *Metal Gear Solid 4* starts here...

Peripheral Vision

Want some add-ons for your spanking new PS3? How about some extra controllers for those multi-player *Virtua Tennis* sessions or an HDMI cable to get the best out of your hi-def picture? They're not going to come cheap...

Sixaxis pad – £34.99
Remote control – £17.99
HDMI, AV and Component AV cables – £17.99 each
S-video cable – £12.99

The best five games...

Resistance: The alien Chimera have brutally over-run the Earth.

Resistance: Fall of Man (Sony)

Review: issue #83 | **Score:** 90%
WWII with aliens – set in the UK. Tight controls, great weapons and superb online play.

The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion (Ubisoft)

Not reviewed
Epic RPG comes to PS3 with exclusive new stuff.

MotorStorm (Sony)

Review: issue #83 | **Score:** 88%
Furious racing, incredible AI and physics – PS3's best looking game hints at the console's true power.

Virtua Tennis 3 (Sega)

Review: issue #85 | **Score:** 85%
A must-buy for *Virtua Tennis* fans.

Def Jam: Icon (EA)

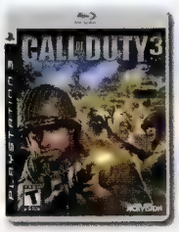
Not reviewed
Innovative scrapper with rhythm and music incorporated into the gameplay.

Also consider...

Ridge Racer 7: Hugely playable and in 1080p – but desperately familiar.

Ridge Racer 7 (Sony)

Review: issue #83 | Score: 80%
The ultimate *Ridge* – stunning scenery and effects. Delivers what you want. And no more.



Call Of Duty 3 (Activision)

Review: issue 82 | **Score:** 89%

Virtua Fighter 5 (Ubisoft)

Review: issue 85 | **Score:** 87%

Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf 2007 (EA)

Review: issue 83 | **Score:** 82%

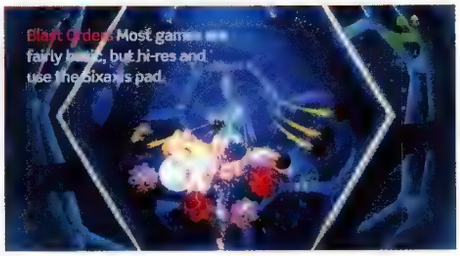
Tony Hawk's Project 8 (Activision)

Review: issue 83 | **Score:** 80%

Online Store games

Download these from day one (For about £5 - TBC)

GT: HD Concept (Free)
Blast Factor
fl0w
Go! Puzzle
Go! Sudoku
Lemmings
Super Rub'a'Dub
Tekken: Dark Resurrection



Blast Orders: Most games fairly basic, but hi-res and use the Sixaxis pad.

"A meteor crashes, bringing with it a vast worm monster"
Blacksite: Area 51 page 14

And the rest...

Blazing Angels Squadrons of WWII (Ubisoft)
Not reviewed

Enchanted Arms (Ubisoft)
Not reviewed
Not previewed

F.E.A.R. (Vivendi)
Not reviewed –
Preview: On page 34 this issue

Fight Night Round 3 (EA)
Review: issue #84 |
Score: 78%

Formula One Championship Edition (Sony)
Review: issue #85 | 84%

Full Auto 2: Battlelines (Sega)
Review: issue #84 |
Score: 36%

Genji: Days Of tThe Blade (Sony)
Review: issue #83 |
Score: 60%

The Godfather: The Don's Edition (EA)
Not reviewed

Marvel: Ultimate Alliance (Activision)
Review: issue #84 |
Score: 78%

Mobile Suit Gundam: Target in Sight (Namco Bandai)
Issue #84 | **Score:** 28%

NBA 2K7 (Take 2)
Not reviewed

NBA Street Homecourt (Electronic Arts)
Not reviewed

NHL 2K7 (Take 2)
Not reviewed

Need for Speed Carbon (EA)
Review: issue #83 |
Score: 58%

Sonic the Hedgehog (Sega)
Not reviewed

Splinter Cell: Double Agent (Ubisoft)
Not reviewed

Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom (EA)
Review: issue #85 |
Score: 59%

World Snooker Championship 2007 (Sega)
Issue #85 | **Score:** 74%

PS2 PLAYTEST

High Price, Great Choice

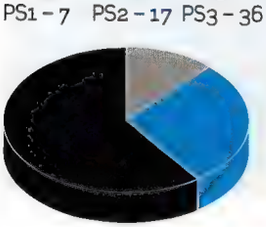
How does PS3 stack up to historical console launches?

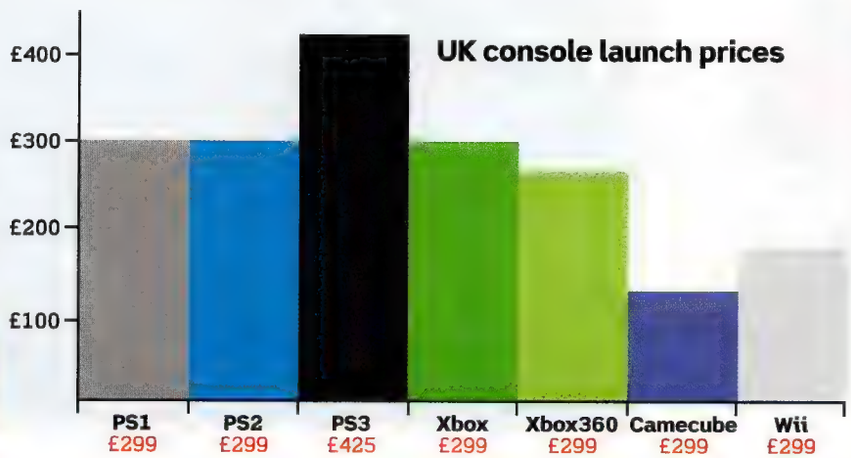
Units available at launch

PS2 UK – 80,000
PS2 US – 500,000
PS3 UK – 230,000
PS3 US – 200,000

UK launch games

PS1 – 7 PS2 – 17 PS3 – 36





Launch Reporting

Why should I buy a PS3? Your questions answered

Why is PS3 better than PS2?

It has a built-in 60Gb hard drive for storing your game saves, photos, videos and music, has a HD Blu-ray player, it's internet ready, it has a motion-sensing wireless controller, incredible graphics powered by Sony's Cell processor and games in true 1080p HD.

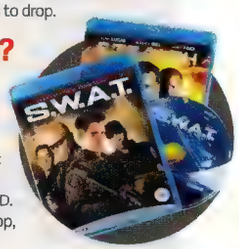
What's HD?

It stands for high definition which, providing you have a telly that supports HD, gives PS3's games pin-sharp, PC monitor-style graphics. HD is quickly becoming the standard, so PS3 is a perfect introduction to the world of high definition. Another big thing is that while Xbox 360 can only do 720p resolution (good, but not the best), PS3 can do true 1080p, which is as good as on-screen images get.

Do I have to buy a new TV?

Obviously to get the full benefit of those HD graphics we mentioned earlier, you'll have to get a telly with either a Component or HDMI port in the back. But you can still get away with a regular RGB SCART, and it's still appreciably better than PS2. You can get a decent size 24 inch HD TV for about £500, but prices are expected to drop.

What's Blu-ray?



Think of watching a film on DVD, then imagine pin-sharp picture quality and crystal clear sound. You've just imagined Blu-ray, the new disc format used by PS3. It stores ten times as much data as DVD. Blu-ray movies are also in 1080p, which means you'll get the most out of them with PS3.

What's the Cell chip?

The brains of PS3. This complex, space age device makes PS3's processor more powerful than most cutting-edge PCs. It's nine times faster than PS2's 'emotion engine' chip – running at 3.2 Ghz to PS2's 294 Mhz. Plus PS3 packs a custom Nvidia G70 graphics card for high-speed 3D.

How does the Sixaxis pad work?

Motion sensors inside the controller detect how you're holding the pad so, for example, in a flying game if you tilt it back, your plane will ascend. There are loads of uses for this and it's up to developers to discover them when they make their games. It's sort of like Nintendo's Wii, but slightly less flexible.

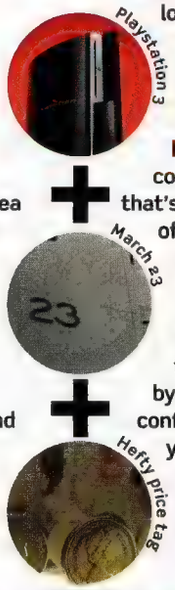
Sixaxis Sony's new pad lacks rumble and feel a bit light – but performs really well.

ON THE DISC
PS3 launch games reviewed on the disc this month

The Opinionator

"Just enough, a bit late... but PS3 will get better"

Given that we secretly feared PS3 was going to launch in September, the March 23 release date is a bit of a relief. In mid-January, only weeks before the mooted launch – when advertising/stocking/release plans are usually firmly in place – nobody in the industry, from PRs to developers to journalists had any idea the console was still on track, and doom-mongering was rife. Sony's silence may have been confusing, but only amplified the feelgood factor around the eventual confirmation – a risky, but shrewd move. On the flip side, perhaps even Sony didn't know they could launch PS3 until the last minute, and lucked out.



Price is right?

£425? Well, it's basically one of, if not the, most expensive console launches in history, and a rip-off compared to relative Japanese (£264) and US prices (£307) – but, in terms of pure technology-for-your-pound, still a decent investment. A standalone Blu-ray player will set you back £800+ alone, while PS3's complex CELL chip architecture guarantees Sony make a chunky loss on each console. The games might not look better than Xbox 360 titles currently, but are at least comparable, and that's with one less year of development expertise. PS3 is a more complex, and potentially powerful, machine than Xbox 360, and by late 2007 we confidently predict you'll see the difference – think original Xbox games to PS2 in terms of gap.

Are we happy?

The 300,000 intial allocation to the UK is better than hoped – if it happens – and Sony look set for a good launch. But only just. Should you buy on day one? Let's just say it's a safe investment – but you'll have to wait until Christmas to really see PS3 shine over Xbox 360. **Dan Dawkins**

Myth-Buster

SEEN THIS?

Blu-ray movies are region-encoded so you can't watch them here

THE TRUTH

Well, the simple truth is that they're not region-encoded at all, despite what a few loudmouths have been saying to the contrary. We know this for a fact – we've got a Japanese machine, and have tested it with Blu-ray discs bought from HMV on the high street. And they work fine, as sharp and crisp as you'd expect. And the same will happen if you import Japanese or American movies to play on your British PlayStation 3. Sure, Sony might region-code discs in the future, but right now there's nothing to worry about. The same applies to the games, of course, so when you get your PS3, expect to be able to purchase from abroad without fear. And if this changes, rest assured we'll tell you immediately. So relax.

Thrill List

The latest news on PlayStation's hottest games, every issue

1 Blacksite: Area 51

The truth is out there...

After a brief hands-on we can tell you that Midway's new PS3 shooter *Blacksite* (sequel to PS2's *Area 51*) is like *Call of Duty*, but with aliens. The demo was set in the moody, rain-lashed town of Rachel, Nevada and was rife with action-packed set-pieces. The highlight was when a meteor came crashing through the roof of the building we were in, sending rubble flying everywhere and bringing with it a vast, wriggling worm monster. Then the demo ended, leaving us gasping for more. Visually it's exceptional, but the fluid controls and epic level-shattering set-pieces are what excite us.

Pub Midway | **Dev** Midway | **ETA** July 2007

Monster mash You can tell your squad to attack or retreat with the D-pad.

"Our game's creator is allergic to crabs"
Genji crab explained page 16

"A meteor crashed, bringing a vast monster"

It's a gas This petrol station was full of destructible scenery, torn to pieces by marauding aliens and gunfire.

2 Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots

New facts emerge

In a recent interview, Kojima revealed that to use Snake's new OctoCamo system you store textures found throughout the level and access them from a menu, like the one in *MGS3*. He also revealed that the shots we've seen so far are all from one part of the game and that Snake will "travel the world" during his final adventure. There were also some hints dropped about the new enemy AI. Apparently you can scare them – for example, shoot the ground next to their feet and they'll start to panic. This'll affect their performance on the battlefield, making it easier for you to hide and defeat them. Kojima's too clever for his own good. Now where's that new trailer...?

Pub Konami | **Dev** Kojima Productions | **ETA** Late 02007

3 Def Jam: Icon

Make your own kind of music

This just in – apparently you'll be able to import your own songs to use as part of *Icon*'s new fighting system. The rhythm of the music affects your character's move set and the environment around them, so the type of music you pick can either help or hinder your performance. One of the development team uses Sade's '80s hit 'Smooth Operator' as his battle track of choice.

Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **ETA** March 2007

4 Timeo

Could be a classic

No, it's not a typo – the game's called *Timeo* (pronounced 'Timezero'). This has come out of nowhere and looks, well, *amazing*. Set in some kind of futuristic 'steampunk' city, it features a tiny man clambering around an enormous man made of bits of buildings – pipes, bricks etc. Details are thin, but we reckon it's like *Shadow Of The Colossus*, but set in a city.

Pub TBC | **Dev** ZootFly | **ETA** TBC

Def Jam: Icon and *Timeo* **Two very different games, but two equally exciting PS3 prospects.**

5 Splinter Cell: Double Agent

Ladies of the night

No, Sam Fisher hasn't had a sex change – this is one of the new 'sexy' female spy skins, exclusive to the PS3 version of *Double Agent*. You'll be able to use them in multi-player mode. "Spies should be cat-like and nimble. And it's more pleasant to watch a lady than a man," said developer Mathieu Hector. We agree, although until the 'nude patch' is released, we're sticking with Sam, thanks.

Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Ubisoft | **ETA** 2007

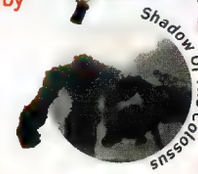
ON THE DISC
Final Fantasy Versus XIII is on the disc now

Fumito Ueda

Shadow of the Colossus genius who makes us weep

What has he done?

Ueda-san began his career at now-defunct Japanese development studio WARP. He worked there as an animator on Saturn survival horror *Enemy Zero*, but was promptly snapped up by Sony as a first-party developer. There, he designed *Ico*, a low-key puzzle game that quickly became a cult classic, followed by its spiritual successor *Shadow Of The Colossus*. Both received huge critical acclaim – including a pair of gushing reviews from us – and are now considered to be among the best games on PlayStation 2



emotionally engaging and compelling than any other game you care to mention. This is due mainly to the beautiful, ethereal visuals and thrilling orchestral soundtrack. Ueda's love of art and film is also a factor. "If I wasn't in the games industry," he once said, "I would be a classical artist."

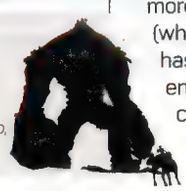
What's he doing now?

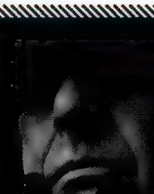
If rumours are to be believed then Team Ico are working on a mystery PlayStation 3 project. Given their track record, we'd expect nothing less than sweeping, beautiful, heartbreaking genius.

Why do we like him?

Ico and *Colossus* are almost entirely bereft of plot and cut-scenes, yet somehow they manage to be more

Who are you?
Name Fumito Ueda
Age 36
Role Designer, Team Ico
Key Games *Enemy Zero*, *Ico*, *Shadow Of The Colossus*





The Insider

He's the man who knows too much...

New **Final Fantasy XIII** details have emerged in an interview with director Motome Toriyama. Apparently the opening scene will be an incredibly intense and large-scale real-time battle. He also talked about the plot – in the game's world, there are people living high in the sky in a place called Cocoon, and people living below. The game revolves around the tensions between the two. Sounds a bit like Midgar in *Final Fantasy VII* to us. Tetsuya Nomura also spoke about **Final Fantasy Versus XIII**, saying that it will use the Sixaxis pad's motion-sensing features and that the game will be similar to *Kingdom Hearts*. *FF* publishers Square Enix have also licensed Epic's Unreal engine – as seen in Xbox 360's stunning *Gears of War* – so future games should look amazing.

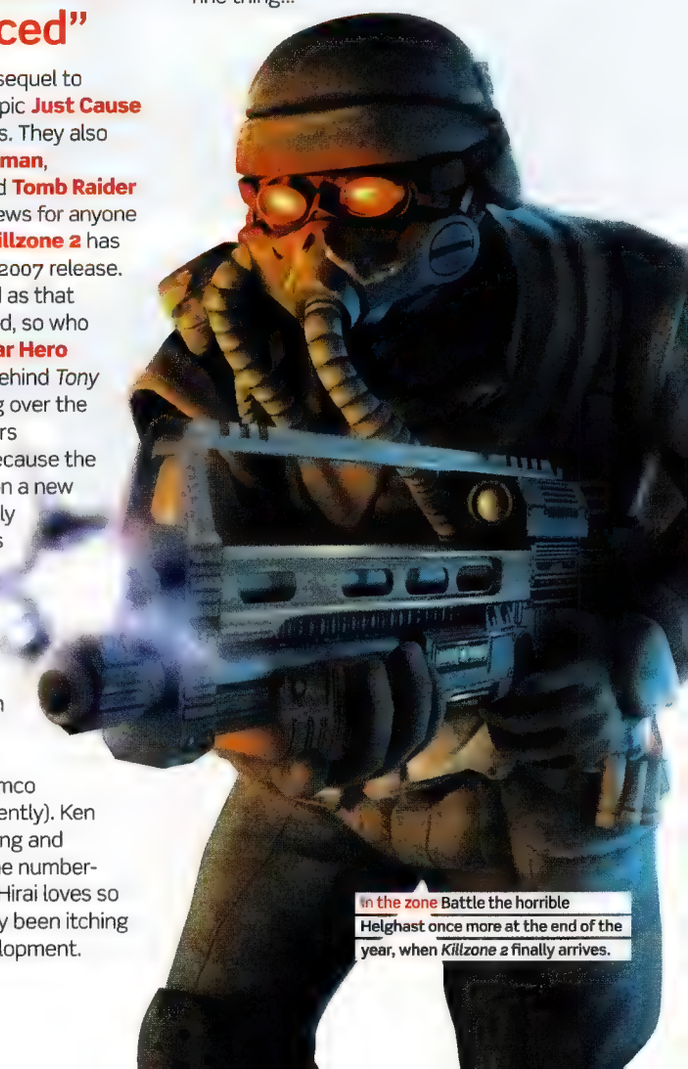
"A next-gen sequel to *Just Cause* has been announced"

In other news, a next-gen sequel to beautiful sun-lashed island epic **Just Cause** has been announced by Eidos. They also officially announced new **Hitman**, **Championship Manager** and **Tomb Raider** games. There's more good news for anyone buying a PS3 too, because **Killzone 2** has been scheduled for a winter 2007 release. We just hope it looks as good as that trailer. *MotorStorm* almost did, so who knows? And now some **Guitar Hero** news. Neversoft, the team behind *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*, are taking over the series from original developers Harmonix. But don't worry because the Harmonix boys are working on a new music game that is apparently a "bigger and more ambitious endeavour than we felt we could pursue within the *Guitar Hero* franchise". Hopefully it's the rumoured **Drum Hero**. Meanwhile, father of the PlayStation Ken Kutaragi has left Sony's management team to work more closely with Bandai Namco (where his son works, apparently). Ken has always been into creating and engineering, rather than the number-crunching that mate Kaz Hirai loves so much, and has allegedly been itching to get into game development.

Watch out for some big PS3 games from VU Games this year – the previously announced **Bourne Identity** game (based on the Matt Damon spy films, with third chapter Bourne Ultimatum due in cinemas this year), plus a new, top secret, project produced in conjunction with one of PC gaming's most revered developers – much more soon.

After a *ten-year-delay* **Duke Nukem Forever** is being prepped for PS3. 3D Realms have posted job ads on their website along with a small screenshot of next-gen Duke. He looks as hard as ever, with his trademark flat-top intact. Finally, has your **PSP** been 'bricked' - i.e. stopped working? And your warranty run out? Don't fret: if you buy a PS3, Sony will fix or replace your knackered handheld, totally free of charge. That's nice of them. Sort of.

Parting shot? Wouldn't it be great if Rockstar made a surprise sequel to grisly cult classic **Manhunt** on PS2? Chance *would* be a fine thing...



In the zone Battle the horrible Helghast once more at the end of the year, when *Killzone 2* finally arrives.

PS3 UPDATE

Genji crab – the truth at last!

"I'm allergic to crabs," explains creator

Fate being a fickle sort of beast, Sony's big PS3 hope *Genji: Days Of The Blade* drew the most comment at last year's E3 not for its historically faithful recreation of warfare in feudal Japan, but for the presence of a distinctly un-historical giant crab that eluded all attempts to flip it over for a quick spot of lancing with a katana.

A little internet ribbing, however, has not blunted the sharp edge of *Genji*'s blade. Sony's vicious hack'n'slash affair utilises a fixed camera and up-close focus to conjure up some of the best graphics we've yet seen on PS3. "We might have given up a little bit of the gameplay," explains the game's creator, Yoshiki Okamoto. "But the idea was to make it really vivid and up-close, like you're fighting in a movie." And what did the *Genji* team make of the crueller internet reactions to Days Of *The Blade*'s oversized crustacean? (see pics) "Obviously no-one among us believes there were giant crabs in feudal Japan," explains Okamoto's translator. "But Okimoto-san is allergic to crabs and that's the reason why, if you find its weak point, you can kill it with one blow. It's Okimoto's way of defeating the crab he hates." And would you begrudge a humble games developer that?

D-delay The net also played host to mockeries of the PS3 launch delay.

Back of the net The internet abounded with piss-takes of the crab.

Real shellfish Some official Genji artwork, titled 'Crabs With Yoshitsune'. Hmm.

Kaneko's satire Some net spoofs were rather more clever than others.

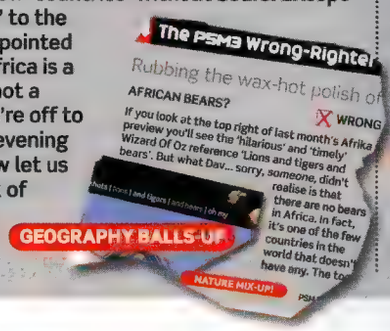
The PSM3 Wrong-Righter

Rubbing the wax-hot polish of truth over past issues

EMAIL PSM3 @
Spotted some Bertie Bollax 'n PSM3? Tell us:
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

AFRICA – MORE CONTROVERSY ☒ WRONG

Right, last month we established that Africa is one of the few 'countries' without bears. Except – and 'thanks' to the reader who pointed this out – Africa is a *continent*, not a country. We're off to geography evening classes. Now let us never speak of this again.



PSM84 page 15

PLAYSTATION 3 LAUNCH DATE ☑ RIGHT

Check out that wall planner we gave away recently – we said PS3 would be out on March 23. And what have Sony just said? PS3 will be out on March 23. Yeah, we're brilliant. Feel free to send us cakes as congratulatory gifts. Thanks.

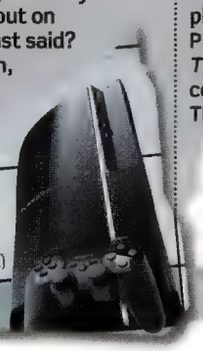
ON THE MONEY

FRIDAY
PS3 out today! (date approximately correct at time of going to press...)

PSM82 wallchart

THE GODFATHER – BACK ON PS3 ☑ RIGHT

Back in issue 81, we told you Electronic Arts were planning another *Godfather* game, this time on PlayStation 3. And this month they announced *The Godfather: The Don's Edition* for that very console. "Go from street soldier to Don," say EA. This might be good. Well, it *might*. PSM81 page 15



of them shows a futu
words 'memory paused'. Oh, and be prepared for another offer you can't refuse as **The Godfather** is getting a PS3 outing. Mmmph.

GOD IT RIGHT

ON THE DISC
All these games will feature on upcoming discs

The last minute shots of big importance

The juiciest pics, squeezed in as we go to press

PSP Driver '76 The chasey racer dons its flares and goes portable

Details Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Ubisoft | **Genre** Racing

Lowdown Salvaged by Ubisoft following the lukewarm *Driver: Parallel Lines*, the once-massive franchise is going back to basics for its PSP debut, tempting us with the Hollywood car chases that made us love it so back in the day, rather than the wannabe *GTA* elements that plagued later instalments. Set in authentic 1970s New York, in addition to the lure of bombing down alleyways to escape the cops, the promise of a classic disco soundtrack has rekindled our interest.

ETA March 30

PS3 Turok Jurassic larks with the return of the dino FPS

Details Pub Buena Vista | **Dev** Propaganda Games | **Genre** FPS

Lowdown An FPS franchise revived from the mists of time and now set on a mysterious jungle planet in the future, all you really need to know is that you're Joseph Turok part of an elite special forces squad, and you get to shoot dinosaurs with big guns. Accompanied by squadmates, you'll come face-face-to-face with all manner of big lizards, including sneaky raptors looking to ambush you and huge T-Rex's with teeth as big as your torso.

ETA Summer

PSP M.A.C.H Modded-up racing takes to the skies

Details Pub VU Games | **Dev** Kuju | **Genre** Racing

Lowdown Touted as the first flight combat/racing game on PSP (and who are we to argue?), *M.A.C.H* comes on like some bizarre airborne *Midnight Club* variant, with embittered ex-fighter pilots modding their decomissioned aircraft and going head-to-head for missile-dodging races. Bound to appeal to all those urban wideboys with F-19's stashed in their garages, besides the plane old career mode, you can also battle to be top gun in Wi-Fi multi-player races and dogfights.

ETA Spring

PS3 Cipher Complex Sneak-'em-up adventure for adrenalin junkies

Details Pub TBC | **Dev** Edge Of Reality | **Genre** Action/Stealth

Lowdown There's a new stealth sheriff in town and his name is John Cipher. Sent to investigate the hostile takeover of a military base in Siberia, Cipher wastes little time fannying about in shadows and jumps straight into action – as would you if you had Cipher's ability to use adrenaline boosts to slow down time, enabling him to unleash vicious surprise attacks on his enemies. Could be a winner.

ETA November

The Optimist

Don't worry. Be happy

Sixaxis pads are really, really cheap!

Finally – PS3's nearly out. March 23. Undoubtedly good news. Even better news – extra Sixaxis pads will cost mere pennies. They're a snip. Only £35. That's only £175 for a six-player game of *PES7* when it comes out – because Sony bundle one pad in for free with each PS3. Bargain.

Throwing a pad-dy

OK, people seem to think £35 is a lot of money, but Wii remotes are the same price and no-one carps on about that. OK, the price of the Wii itself is less than half that of PS3, but clearly PS3's games are superior – they get *Zelda*, we get *Gundam*, and I know which one *I'd* rather play – so it balances out. Besides, the Sixaxis is far better than the Wiimote – it must be, it won an Innovation Award at CES in LA, thus *entirely* disproving the theory that the motion-sensing idea was a last-minute rush job by Sony to try and nick customers from Nintendo. It must be *loaded* with techno-trickery that Wii doesn't have. Exactly what, I'm not sure, but it must be. The award speaks for itself.

So get yourself a second pad. OK, I'll concede, to some it must be a fair-sized outlay, but look on the bright side – it's less than the price of a game. And you're not moaning about spending 50 quid each time on *those*, are you? Oh.

EMAIL @ PSM3
£35 for a second pad? Send us your thoughts.
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[EXCLUSIVE REVIEW]

Burnout Dominator

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FREE m&m's

Ultimate PSP games guide + Peanut M&Ms*

*Sweets not available in all territories

196 REVIEWS INSIDE!

PS3

Pub Midway | **Dev** Midway
Price £ | **Genre** Action
FYI John Woo's gaming debut

ON THE DISC
Stranglehold will be on next month's disc

BLAST ACTION HERO

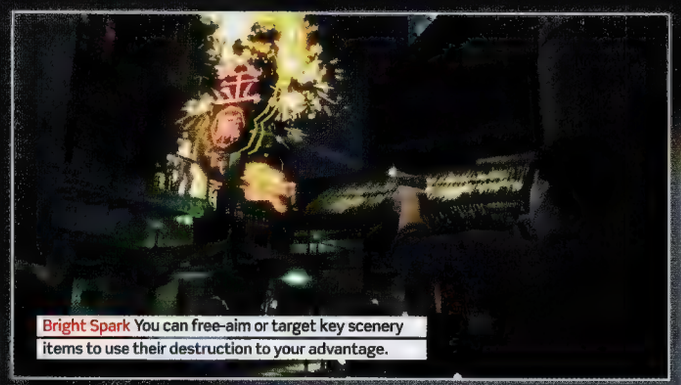
John Woo's explosive *Stranglehold* proves PS3's true potential – get ready to blow up *everything*...

We're behind a pillar. Sorry – Hollywood action hero *Chow Yun-Fat* is behind a pillar, face grim, eyes narrowed and hands gripping dual beretta pistols. As moonlight bathes the museum, gloomily illuminating the looming dinosaur skeleton above, we hear the muffle of incoming footsteps.

Hopelessly outnumbered, desperately low on health, we swing into the open and – in a few violent stabs of PS3's Sixaxis pad – erupt into a spiralling slow-motion weave of bullets and trace-lines, spinning and firing with impossible accuracy in all directions at once. Our enemies collapse to the floor theatrically like an elaborate puppet display. A brief orchestral flourish blows upon the air. A set of doves flutter upwards...

Stranglehold

"Enemies collapse to the floor theatrically like an elaborate puppet display"



Bright Spark You can free-aim or target key scenery items to use their destruction to your advantage.

Sounds a bit over the top, right? Well, it would do if you didn't know that the man behind the action was John Woo, master of excessive Hong Kong action. His films – both in the East and, more recently, in Hollywood – have redefined on-screen violence with super-stylised gunplay and iconic posturing. Well that and doves – nothing marks out a director who takes violence seriously more than the ritualistic release of doves after a killing spree. And none of Woo's films typifies these elements more than Hard-Boiled, the 1992 flick starring Chow Yun-Fat as the indestructible Inspector Tequila, waging a bloody war against the Triads. Now, overseen by Woo and with Yun-Fat reprising his role, *Stranglehold*'s bringing Tequila back on PS3, with a storyline that sees the Triads kidnap the hard-bitten Inspector's ex-wife and daughter. Bad move, Triads...

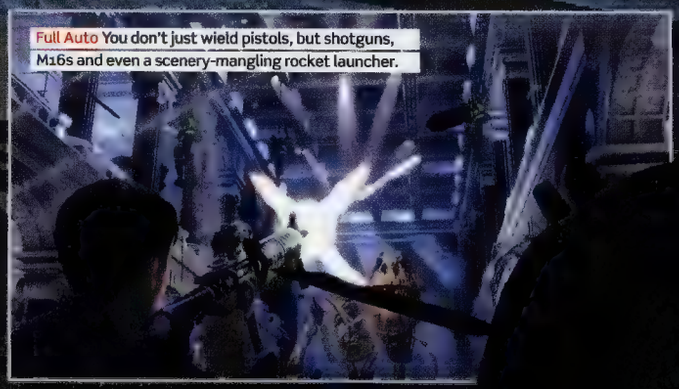
Woo's the daddy?

Of course, while the prospect of Woo directing a PS3 sequel to his most famous film is mouth-watering, it's worth noting that the director's influence has preceded him into the world of videogames. Plenty of Woo-inspired titles have done the whole bullet-time thing already. *Max Payne*, *The Matrix*, *F.E.A.R.* – taking their cue from the Hong Kong veteran, they've each stolen a piece of *Stranglehold*'s thunder.

Woo who?

A quick trawl through the director's career

Woo began in the '80s and early '90s with a string of Hong Kong action films like A Better Tomorrow, The Killer and Hard Boiled. Frenetically violent and crammed with macho posturing and gun-fetish camerawork, these led to a move to Hollywood in 1993. Starting small – with the rubbish Hard Target – Woo was soon back on track with Broken Arrow and the brilliantly over the top Face/Off. Recent efforts, though, (Mission: Impossible II and Windtalkers) have seen a dip in form. Will *Stranglehold* see Woo back to his best?



Full Auto You don't just wield pistols, but shotguns, M16s and even a scenery-mangling rocket launcher.

What potentially sets *Stranglehold* apart from the bullet-time crowd, though, is its ambition to go beyond stylish slo-mo effects. With PS3's power opening up a whole new level of possibilities, *Stranglehold* aims to deliver a degree of physicality and interaction never achieved before. For instance everything – *everything* – onscreen is destructible. Pillars dissolve into dust under fire, tables and chairs are chipped away to nothing and roofs, statues and signs can be dislodged and used to take out enemy stooges. Better yet, the destruction – a beautifully rendered pixel by pixel orchestration – is random. Play through the same section 50 times and you'll not see the same box splinter and crack the same way twice.

Even more crucial to capturing the essence of Woo's films is Tequila's ability to fluidly interact with his environment and the objects around him. Once again, there's very little on-screen furniture that can't be used in this way – Tequila can kick over tables and use them for cover, slide down bannisters and rails, swing from chandeliers and even kick-jump off walls. To make Tequila's acrobatics feel as effortless as they look on film, these interactions are automatically triggered when you come into contact with obstacles.

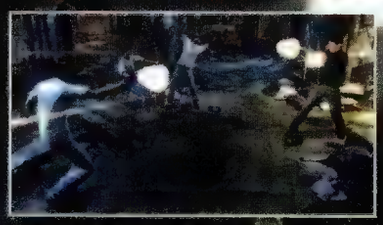
Triad, try again

While this lends the game an intuitive pick-up-and-play feel, currently there are also some worries about over-sensitivity. Say you're running through a room picking off Triads. Accidentally, you skim past a table and, before you can react, Tequila's sliding across it on his backside, skewing your aim and making you miss your intended target. It's a fine balance for the former *Psi-Ops* (of PS2 fame) developers to strike.

Once you're comfortable with Tequila's range of acrobatics you'll be able to chain his most extrovert moves together to earn style points. These style points (represented by silver stars that tot up on the left-hand side of the screen) require more than a quick slide 'n' shoot – think more along the lines of doing a wall-jump and sliding down a rail, then leaping to grab a chandelier, before

Dropping the bombs

A closer look at Tequila's special moves



Health Boost

Probably the least exciting of the lot. A potentially life-saving energy regeneration that comes in handy if there are no health packs around.

Precision Aim

Time slows and Tequila enters first-person mode to deliver a one-shot kill. Take your pick of body parts – including a man's vegetables – and then watch in painful close-up as your enemy is left clawing uselessly at gaping wounds.

Barrage

Reloading his weapon mid-fight, Tequila grimaces and shakes his head as if to say "You guys are screwed when I finish loading this deadly metal trumpet". Which they are, of course, as the Inspector unleashes scores of rounds simultaneously.

Spin Attack

Tequila spins around with arms outstretched, killing all enemies in the area. Everyone falls down dead. Then birds arrive. From somewhere. It's like magic. He's like some sort of homicidal Paul Daniels.

Stranglehold

"Tequila's acrobatics feel as effortless as they look on film"

landing on a table with wheels and rolling through enemy-filled rooms unloading your pistols. You won't have time to blink.

Tequila slammers

Once collected, the points are then used to activate one of four Tequila bombs, the Inspector's *really* special moves. Each one of the bombs is triggered by pressing a direction on the D-pad: health boost, precision shot, barrage and – bringing us back to where we came in – the spin attack, complete with doves and haunting music (see 'Dropping The Bombs'). The Tequila bombs are the pinnacle of *Stranglehold*'s delirious excess – brazenly choreographed and archly stylish – but we worry that there's not enough of them, and that with such a small number they'll become repetitive all too quickly.

Fair to say, then, that doubts linger about *Stranglehold*'s ambitious physics, but one thing's for certain – the game *looks* amazing. The beautiful environments and exploding scenery are captivating and the hi-res likeness of

Dino Crisis You can run up the T-Rex's spine, firing as you go, or blast it apart to crush your enemies.

Mask, and you shall receive The early demo is a bit too easy, but Midway are tuning the difficulty pre-release.

Rail, here, to launch Just leap while holding L1 to to lock onto the bannister and begin sliding...

Gimme dive Our hero flows off the rail, shooting all the time, into a seamless full length, dual-wielding dive...

Shirt happens After rolling across the floor on the trolley, mopping up foes mid-trajectory, Chow Yun leaps back and reflects – bloodily - on his moves.

Totalling the tea house

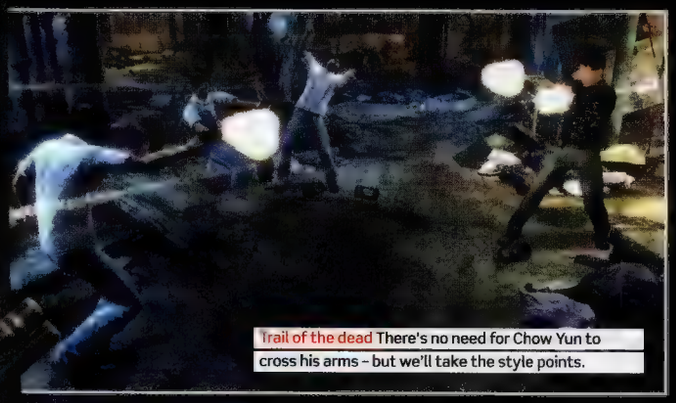
Want to destroy something beautiful?

The action might be seamlessly visceral to the point of anaesthesia, but it isn't inconsequential – post-battle, the level looks totally shattered, eliciting an odd, calming, destructive pride. It's way richer than, say, *Black* on PS2, with the world almost completely unrecognisable. Bullets don't just scar or create scuff textures, but blow huge chunks out of masonry and shatter plate glass.

More Tequilas, anyone?

Multi-player rumours

Not much has been announced about *Stranglehold*'s multi-player, except that one will be included. It seems that Midway are struggling to find a way to make the slow-motion Tequila Time work within a multi-player setting (how do you manage several players randomly engaging slow-motion?). They say they're working on a creative solution that's not been seen before; we're intrigued and looking forward to seeing more soon.



Trail of the dead There's no need for Chow Yun to cross his arms – but we'll take the style points.

Arch villain The game isn't just set in Hong Kong, with huge levels in the USA, creating greater variety.

"Beautiful, exploding scenery... it *screams* 'next generation'"

Chow Yun-Fat *screams* 'next-gen' – it's a leap you can't appreciate until you see it in action. So while there's something ominously appropriate about a John Woo game that looks the business but falls short on substance – not unlike some of his image-obsessed films – we'd love to see the finished version of *Stranglehold* iron out its problems and deliver what could be something truly special.

The wings of a dove

Woo explains his trademark

"I love doves. I am a Christian. Doves represent the purity of love, beauty. They're spiritual. Also the dove is a messenger between people and God. When I shot The Killer, these two men, the killer and the cop, they work in different ways, but their souls are pure, because they do the right thing. In the church scene, I wanted to bring them together. I wanted to use a metaphor of the heart. I came up with doves – they're white. When the men die, I cut to the dove flying – it's the soul, rescued and safe and also pure of heart."

PSM3 Reckons

It *could* be brilliant, with the seamless flow between leaping off walls, landing on dinosaurs and blasting goons only topped by the level of destruction. Glass, pillars and even stuffed dodos can be blown into bits. It's so simple to play, there's a hypnotic addiction to charging around levels rewriting the scenery. Here's the problem – it's currently *so* fluid, we fear the finished game might lack variety, or challenge – areas Midway are vowing to address. Either way, it's a game PS2 couldn't handle and a stunning advert for PS3.

"John Woo's always wanted to do a game because viewers don't influence what happens in the linear story of a movie"

We talk about movies, games and pterodactyls with *Stranglehold's* Creative Director, Alex Offerman

What was it like working with John Woo and Chow Yun-Fat?

Chow Yun-Fat is doing the voiceover for his character (Detective Tequila) and he's mostly in Hong Kong, so we sent an audio guy out there to work with him. They had someone to help him with his pronunciation, a voice coach, because English is only his second language. We took scans of his face and body and, even though it wasn't contractually required, we asked him whether it'd be OK to take shots of him with different facial expressions like anger or pain so we could animate him in the game. He was very gracious and allowed us this extra time. So Chow Yun-Fat was great to work with.

John Woo has been very involved in development. From the beginning, when we found out we had the opportunity to do this game, we sat down with all his films, like Hard Boiled and Killer, and then we worked closely with him on all of the storylines. We wanted the game to play out in Hong Kong and the US, so we worked out a basic structure with John and his scriptwriters to do all the dialogue and how the scenes would pan out. We then took it to the next step and planned out storyboards, and then used his storyboard artists from his movies to make sure that, every step of the way, he'd review them and could comment on them. Even on the conceptual art level we were passing drafts to John Woo and his team for comment. So it's been a really great experience.

Was John Woo excited about working on his debut game?

Yeah. After speaking with him and his close colleagues it's clear that John has always wanted to do something else with Hard Boiled, but remaining in that universe. John Woo's always talked about wanting to do a game because in movies it's a linear story, and the viewer doesn't have any influence in what happens. I think for him it's really exciting to be doing a story where he has all these elements that make his movies popular and gamers can get involved in this interactive entertainment. He's not a gamer himself, though he has played them on occasion.

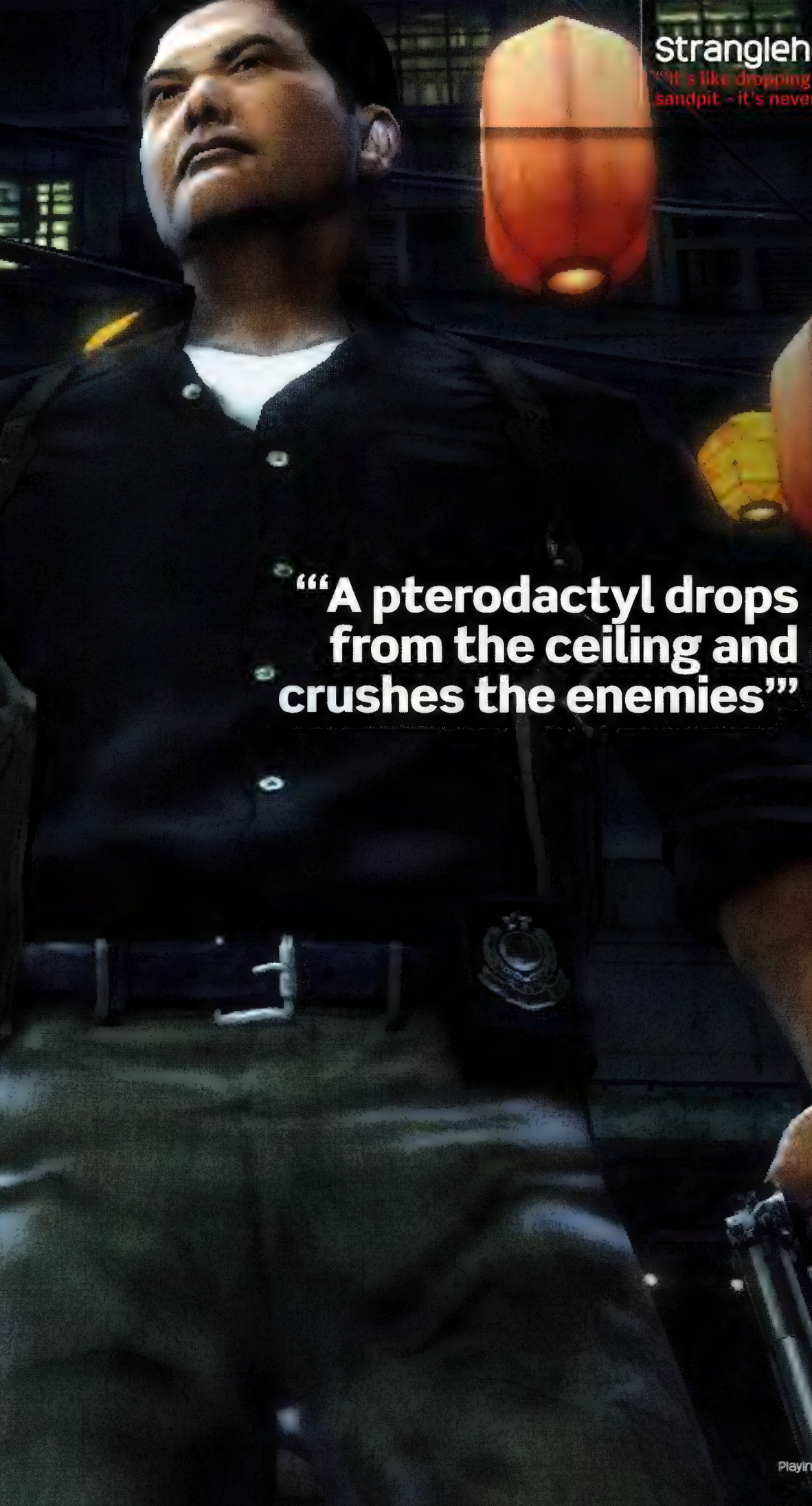
Ceiling groovy Sliding while using scenery to crush goons? That'll score great style points and save time.

What sets *Stranglehold* apart from other games that do Bullet Time, like *Max Payne* and *Total Overdose*?

We definitely looked at *Total Overdose* while we were making *Stranglehold*, but we looked at all games that had any similarities with what we were trying to create. *TO* is a little more 'gamey' than *Stranglehold*, because we wanted to make something a little more realistic. We couldn't make a John Woo game that didn't have slow-motion in it. A game like *Max Payne* is a John Woo game. They borrowed so many traits from his movies that it was impossible for us to make *Stranglehold* without looking at it. But we let you interact with the environment more, like jumping on roll carts, swinging from statues while still shooting. There's a short term benefit in slow-motion shooting that lets you get the drop on your enemy, but long term, as you do these cool interactions and cinematics, you get style points which go towards unlocking your Tequila Bomb special moves.

So the style points are represented by silver stars, right? How do they work?

Correct. It all depends on how you pull off a kill. If you take someone down normally then you'll get one point, but if you do it while you're diving you'll get *two* style points. And say you dived off a wall, spun around and killed a couple of guys with



"A pterodactyl drops from the ceiling and crushes the enemies"

headshots, then you'd get more and more style points. The cooler you look doing stuff, the better you'll be rewarded.

What does *Stranglehold* do that other games can't compete with?

There's a lot of stuff being destroyed in *Stranglehold*, which is a trademark of John Woo's movies. We wanted to capture the slow-motion diving bits, like where Chow Yun-Fat is flying through the air and all the while gunshots are ringing out everywhere and the whole place is falling down around him. Plus there are so many intricacies with *Stranglehold* that you won't notice them all until you play.

What can we expect from *Stranglehold* as we progress?

We're going to have lots of cool stuff, like taking out a pterodactyl suspended from a ceiling and it drops down and crushes the enemies below. There's a great example of this where there's a big statue which is totally destructible, but if you shoot the left leg out it'll drop to the left or if you shoot the right it'll drop the other way, because it's a real object of base physics. So if you take out the side where a load of guys are stood, it'll drop and take them all out. In terms of weapons, we've got loads. There are pistols, shotguns, missile launchers and grenades. And as you progress, the enemies get a lot tougher. So in the beginning, for instance, you can run into a room and take out a lot guys no problem. But when you get to the Chicago level, you'll be faced with ex-Russian soldiers who are wearing body armour and will also use tactics to flank and try to get the jump on you all the time. This means you'll need to change your own gameplan and use headshots and special moves more as the action gets more challenging. It's like dropping a load of toys into a sandpit and letting the gamer figure out how to use them in order to overcome different challenges – so hopefully it's never the same game twice.

Take your PC gaming to the next level

Windows Vista brings a whole host of next-generation features to the discerning PC gamer. Here are just a few that you need to know about

Windows Vista is the brand new version of Windows. Not only does it offer huge improvements in security, usability and appearance over Windows XP, but it's primed to meet all the demands that 3D games will be throwing at it in the near future.

It all revolves around DirectX 10, the next-generation interface that games programmers are going to be using to push the boundaries of 3D games. DirectX 10 brings with it incredible new levels of detail and the ability to have more complex objects moving around in each scene. The result is stunning and offers a much more cinematic experience. Want to see what we're talking about? Just take a look at the in-game footage of *Crysis* at www.crysis-online.com. You'll be blown away.

There are other improvements, too. Windows Vista also introduces a new Games Explorer, which will make all your games accessible from one single location. And if you share your PC with your kids, then you'll be happy to know that there are built-in parental controls to prevent them playing games that are unsuitable for their ages. Also, if you own an Xbox 360, it's good to know that its wireless controllers will work with Windows Vista as well.

So, if you want to stay current with your PC gaming, then Windows Vista is the way to go. Oh, and those massive improvements in PC security, usability and appearance? Don't worry, they're all thrown in for free.

Game information
Click on any game icon and here you'll see information about who made it, when you last played it and what version you have.

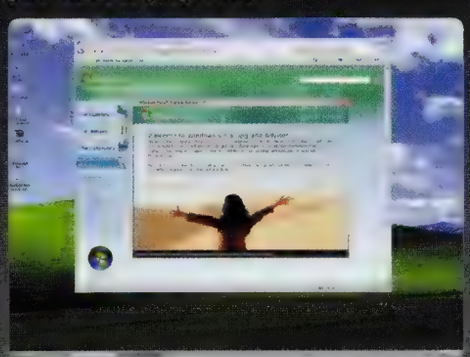
See saved games
Simply right-click on a game's icon here to get to the Saved Games folder where you can access your saves.

Is my PC up to running Windows Vista?

Don't panic, there's every chance that your PC will run Windows Vista without any upgrades at all, especially if it's already capable of playing the latest 3D games. However, all PCs are not created equal, and to ensure that you get the best gaming experience, only PCs that are worthy can upgrade to Windows Vista.

It's easy to find out if your current PC meets the necessary hardware requirements – simply download the free Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor from www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/getready. Run it on your PC and you'll get the definitive verdict on whether your computer is up to running Windows Vista.

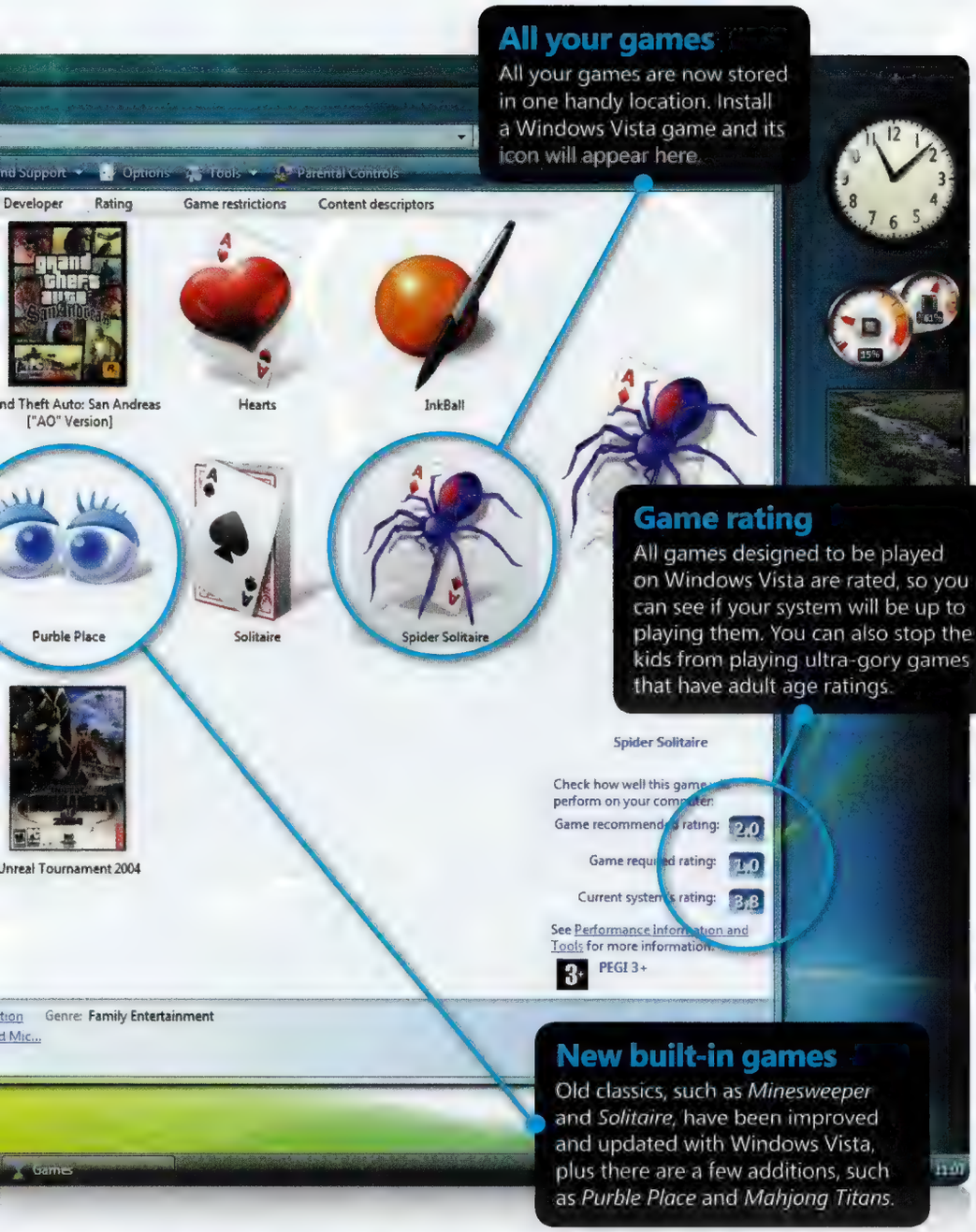
Windows Vista gives each PC a Windows Experience rating that tells you at a glance how powerful your processor, graphics card, memory and hard drive are, with a single combined score. The higher the number it comes up with, up to a current maximum of 5.9, the better your PC will be able to run Windows Vista and whatever games you want to play on it.

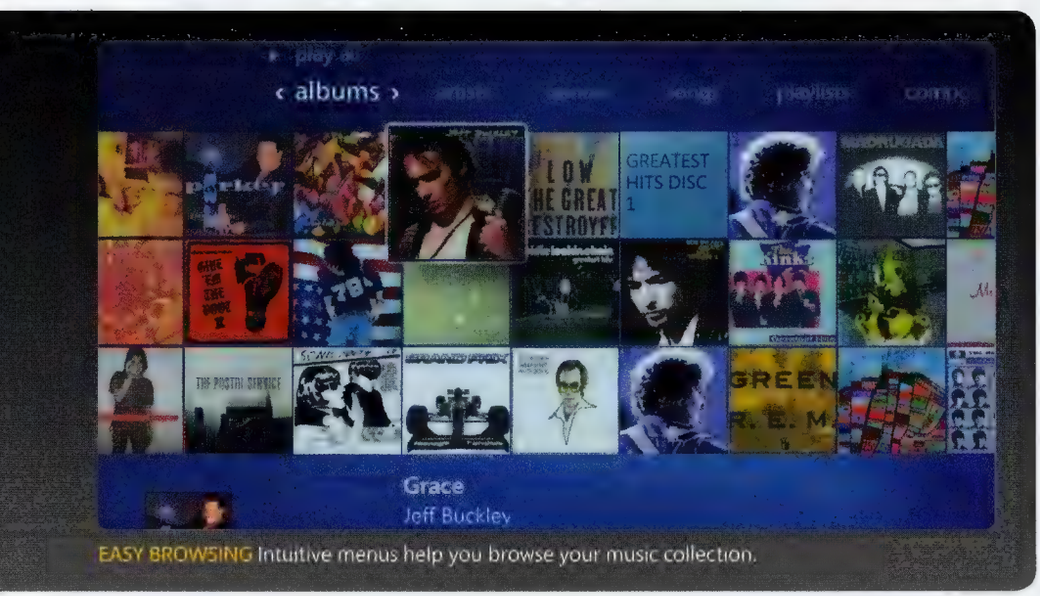


RATE YOUR PC Get an at-a-glance rating to find out how well your PC will run Windows Vista.

Media Center

Windows Media Center lies at the heart of the Ultimate and Home Premium editions of Windows Vista. Connect up your PC to your HDTV and browse your music and video collection. What's more, you can now bin your set-top DVD recorder! With Media Center and a TV tuner card in your PC you can play back, record and timeshift TV programmes. Get hold of Windows Media Center Extender (a device that plugs into your TV) and you can stream your media from a PC anywhere in your house. If you own an Xbox 360, this Extender capability is aleady built into it.


All your games
All your games are now stored in one handy location. Install a Windows Vista game and its icon will appear here.
Developer
Rating
Game restrictions
Content descriptors
Hearts
InkBall
Purble Place
Solitaire
Spider Solitaire
Game rating
All games designed to be played on Windows Vista are rated, so you can see if your system will be up to playing them. You can also stop the kids from playing ultra-gory games that have adult age ratings.
Spider Solitaire
Game recommended rating:
Game required rating:
Current system's rating:
See Performance information and Tools for more information.
PEGI 3+
Unreal Tournament 2004
Genre: Family Entertainment
New built-in games
Old classics, such as Minesweeper and Solitaire, have been improved and updated with Windows Vista, plus there are a few additions, such as Purble Place and Mahjong Titans.



Get more from your PC with Windows Vista: The Official Magazine

Whether you're already running Windows Vista, or thinking about upgrading, the Windows Vista Magazine tells you everything you need to know

We'll show you...

- How to tell whether your PC will run Windows Vista
- Simple, cost-effective upgrades to get your PC into peak condition
- PCs you can buy today that will run Windows Vista at its best
- How to install Windows Vista and be up and running in 30 minutes
- What you can do with Windows Vista that you couldn't do with Windows XP
- Great new hardware and software that runs under Windows Vista
- And much more!

Windows Vista
The Official Magazine
DISCOVER HOW TO...
Get your PC ready for Windows Vista
Choose the right version for you
Ensure a quick and easy installation
Launch issue only
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A PC MAGAZINE FOR REAL LIFE
100% jargon-free
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Phones, cameras, music players, laptops, monitors – and more!
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PC TV tuners on test
Buy a Windows Vista PC today

Issue one is out now for just 99p!

Find out more at www.windowsvistamagazine.co.uk

PS3

Pub Midway | **Dev** Epic
Players 1-32 | **Genre** FPS
FYI Online-focused sci-fi action on an epic scale

ON THE DISC
See Unreal Tournament 3 on the Future Disc

Weapons of choice

Among *UT3*'s confirmed weapons is the Translocator, which lets you set a teleport point and zap there in a flash. The Biogun (pictured) fires green blobs that stick to any surface and explode after a short period. Like proximity mines. Ouch.

Unreal Tournament 3

The future of the online Deathmatch

Andy Kelly

Race for the prize

There are a number of different races to choose from in *UT3*, including the Nahkti (pictured below) who are ancient Egyptians, living on a different planet and with advanced technology. Others include the Krall, The Corrupt, Iron Guard, Juggernauts, Twin Souls and The Necris, a mixture of aliens, humans and other oddballs.

Mode for it

As well as regular Deathmatch and Capture The Flag modes, *UT3* also features Unreal Warfare, a game that blends single player-style objectives with, oddly, resource management. As well as taking over points on the battlefield, you have to keep your bunkers stocked with a substance called tarydium. Complex, but could be good.

PSM3 Reckons

A wealth of modes, vehicles and characters makes this one of the most varied, exciting online FPS on PS3 – but familar fare for PC fans.

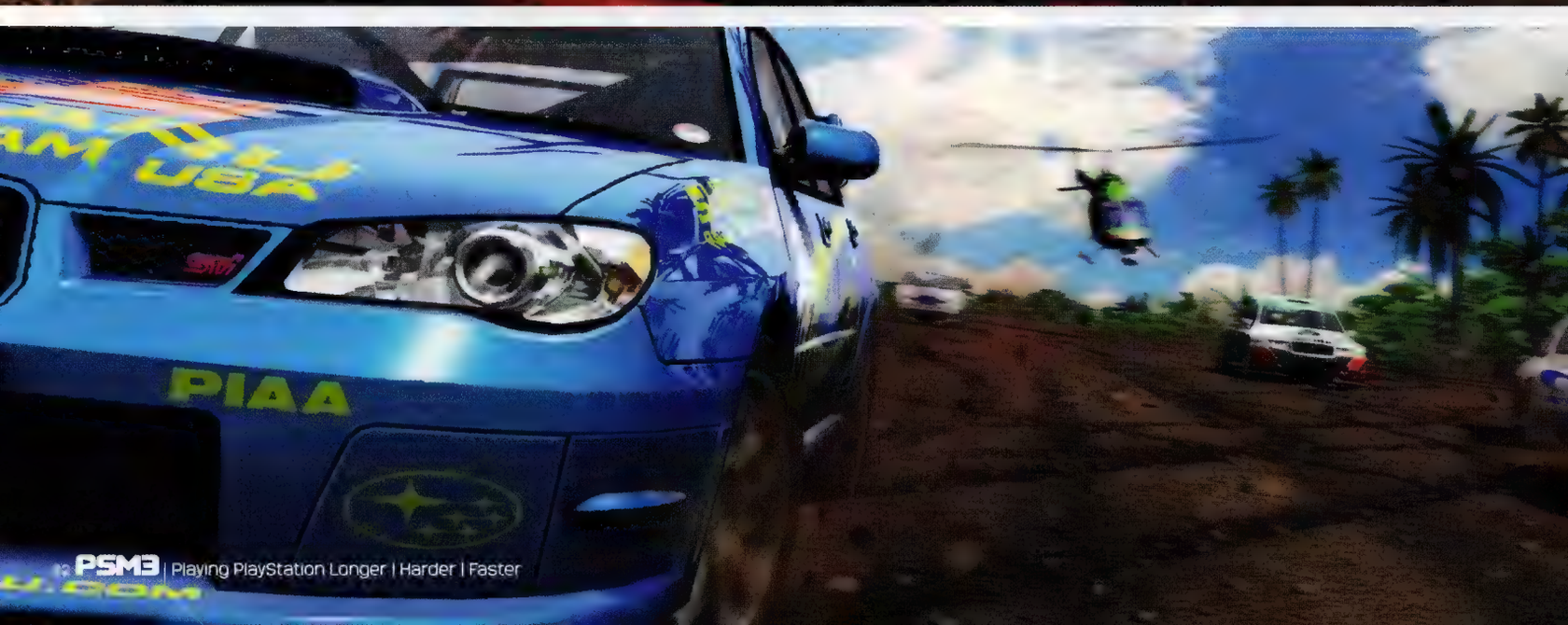
ETA MAY 2007

PS3

Pub Sega | **Dev** Sega Racing Studio
Players 1-6 (online) | **Genre** Sports
FYI The old rally game is reborn

ON THE DISC
See *Sega Rally* on the disc next time around

Rumer mud There's a lot of dirt sticking to your car. Drive through water to wash it off.

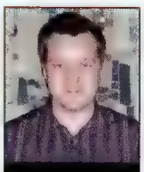


Track it in Driving through old tyre tracks affects the way your car will handle.

Sega Rally

David Cook

Rally man claims PS3's tilt pad is 'rubbish'...



Guy Wilday is head of the new Sega Racing Studio. This latest *Sega Rally* is the first game of their own.

Hello, Guy. So what have you preserved from the older *Sega Rally* games and just what has been changed?
Working on a game where the inspiration is 12 years old is hard. Sega games have a certain style and we tried to capture that. It's easy to get a game to look realistic, but it's hard to give it a style. We also wanted to retain the same close racing and accessible handling of the original, while exploiting the next-gen and adding features previous generations couldn't have done – like the surface deformation, where your car's tyres leave grooves in the mud – grooves which change according to surface type and how often you drive over them, or the way different types of mud stick to your car, so you'll be covered in mud, sand, grit... all sorts.

Will older fans of the game find this feels like *Sega Rally* from the off?
We've tried to do two things. First, for people who love the original – we hope they feel this is a worthy successor. But there's a whole new market who have never played *Sega Rally* – so we hope they just pick it up and think it's a great game. People want accessible games with multi-player modes.

How many different types of car will there be?
There will be more than 30 – and a good mix of cars. Four-wheel drives and two-wheel drive classics among others, and some specialist bonus vehicles to unlock as well. There will be plenty.

And what are the game modes?
The single-player Championship is the main thing, but there will also be multi-player split-screen and an online mode for up to six players at once. And expect downloadable content later on – bonus cars and tracks, that sort of thing.

Will there be tilt control?
Yes, tilt control will be included – it's not difficult to do. Fundamentally, though, the whole tilt control thing is rubbish... it's no compensation for rumble.

How have you found working on PlayStation 3? Have you been able to make the game that you envisioned at the start?
PlayStation 3 is very sophisticated and innovative, although it always takes a while to get your head around a new platform. But we've got a pretty good understanding of what the machine is capable of now. And we've done exactly what we wanted to do – this is what a next generation *Sega Rally* should look like. And the more games we produce, the better they'll be as we get more used to the machine. It's very exciting.

How's the PSP version coming? Will it link up to the PS3 game?
It's coming along well. It's slightly different due to the hardware limitations, but it's the same experience – handling and playability are just the same. It's very possible it will link to the PS3 game, and this is something we're exploring at the moment.

What other racers will Sega Racing Studio be producing? Would you create something like a new *OutRun*?
It's as important to make new games as reinvent old ones. No hints at this stage, but there are a number of options...

PSM3 Reckons
It certainly looks bloody lovely – and there's a chance it might out-mud *MotorStorm*. We're looking forward to getting to grips with this one.

Pub VU Games | **Dev** Monolith
Players 1-32 | **Genre** First-person shooter
FYI Scary like rabid dogs with machetes

ON THE DISC
More F.E.A.R. on the disc next time around

F.E.A.R.

Feel the F.E.A.R. and embrace it

Andy Kelly

1 Fierce slow motion combat

Squeezing L1 activates your character's supernatural reflexes. Under their influence you can perform devastating melee attacks – roundhouse and mid-air bicycle kicks for example – and skip merrily around your baffled enemies, filling them with red hot lead. Skill.

2 Scarily realistic AI

The soldiers in *F.E.A.R.* – mindless clones who blindly follow the orders of their evil creator – have one goal and one only... stopping you from breathing. During gunfights you can hear their radio chatter, which relates directly to your actions;, "He's behind that crate!" or "Shit! He's flanking us!" and so forth. They're an agile bunch too and will climb over obstacles to get at you, leap through windows and work in teams to hunt you down.

3 Chilling level design

It's not as scary as it thinks it is, but there are times when you just can't help but shiver with claustrophobia. The frequent appearance of ghostly little girl Alma, flickering lights and unearthly noises are brilliantly effective. The game is saturated with atmosphere.

4 Colourful characters

The game features a wide cast of incidental characters. The most memorable is portly computer engineer Norton Mapes who helps you in the second level. His belt buckle reads 'RTFM' – net slang for 'read the fucking manual', a phrase popular among hateful nerds, of whom Mapes is a clear parody.

5 The next level of enemy

The mech soldiers appear infrequently, but when they do you'll know about it. The only way you can get rid of them is with explosives and they come with flesh-searing lasers and dual rocket launchers.

PSM3 Reckons

Not quite up to the standards of the PC version – the scenery textures are a bit drab for PS3 – but we like what we've seen so far. Review soon.

ETA MAR 2007

Your words, your pictures, your videos...

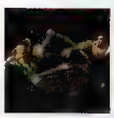
Your Space

Start

30 Letters
Choice cuts from the PSM3 mail sack.

32 Robo-Mind
The robot is back and he's angrier than ever.

33 MySpace
Our eight favourite readers this month.



34 Reader Critic
Disagree with our scores? You try it.

35 YouTube
The best videogamer videos around.

36 Challenge
Monthly challenges for hardcore gamers.

37 I Can Do This!
Your top gaming feats exposed.

37 Beat The Team
Can you beat Dan D and Nathan online?

PSM3 Wants You!

Post PSM3, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW. Star letter wins the writer a game

Email PSM3@futurenet.co.uk

Text 87103 and start your message PSM3

MySpace & the PSM3 blog Go to myspace.com/psm3 or check out psm3mag.com

Online Play the team at online games and win big

Letters To PSM3

Your letters and emails, sifted and printed

Tempted by another

LETTER

A few months ago I was in no doubt about getting a PS3. But now after the release date was pushed back, and seeing other consoles and their games, I wonder why I'm waiting and preparing to pay more. The only game I really want is *MGS4*, most titles nowadays are released on all systems and while *Resistance* and others may be epic, you can buy an Xbox 360 with *Gears Of War* right now to play an equally good game for less money...

"PS3 is looking more and more rubbish..."

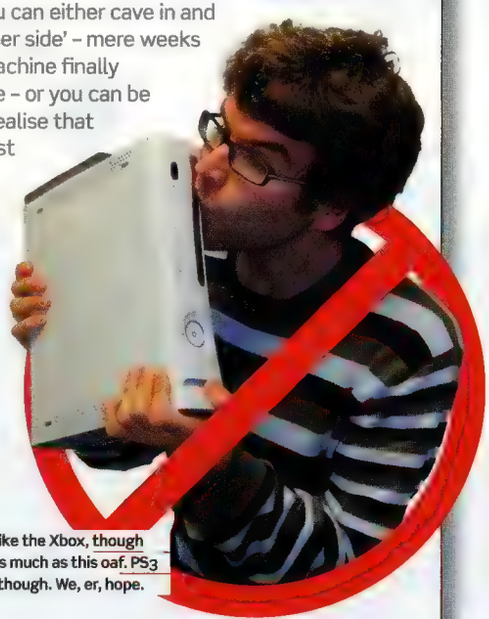
Then there's the next point – since I'm at university, I don't own a 124" flat-screen television and, due to that, I don't think graphics are going to be that much of an issue in my choice of console. Finally, yes, PlayStation 3 is a Blu-ray player, but even if it is a better quality I don't have a television to do it justice. And if you're going to take games back to just having fun, then I'm seriously considering buying a Wii.

Now I know this is a PS3 magazine, so you're going to be pro-PS3, but surely you can admit that Sony have really got to pull out all the stops now. And even then the worldwide sales figures (Xbox 360: seven million units, Wii: one million units, PS3: 200,000...) make you wonder who's going to buy a PS3 at all.

But I still want a PS3, even if it's looking more and more rubbish.

Miles Taylor, email

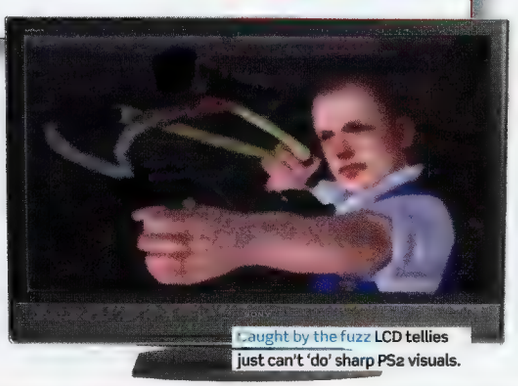
Perhaps we shouldn't be printing such an anti-PS3 email, but as of *now*, Miles has a point – even if the main reason why Xbox 360 has 'better' games is because it's had a year's head start on PS3. If you remember the Xbox 360 launch, the games were largely average (*Perfect Dark Zero*, *Kameo*...). PS3's, however, are *mostly* good (we'll ignore *Gundam* and *Full Auto 2*), and will only get better. So you can either cave in and go to 'the other side' – mere weeks before the machine finally launches here – or you can be patient and realise that PS3 is only just getting started. It was a similar situation at the dawn of PS2, and Sony's console went on to rule the world. It's up to you, Miles...



Box hunting We like the Xbox, though admittedly not as much as this oaf. PS3 will win the day, though. We, er, hope.

Televisual distress

Our old telly conked out a few days ago and I went with my dad in search of a new one. I knew the features needed for PS3 – things like HD capabilities, a decent screen resolution and an HDMI socket. We eventually bought one in the sales for £400 (down from £600). It was an LG 26" LCD. Anyway, we got home and set it up and were quite impressed with the sharp digital viewing. I went onto my PS2 expecting *Canis Canem Edit* to look all the sweeter, but no. The sharpness had gone, the colour was washed out and the jagged edges were very apparent. I know HD will probably magnify PS2's weak points, but the game looks quite a bit worse than on my ten-year-old crappy 20-inch



Caught by the fuzz LCD tellies just can't 'do' sharp PS2 visuals.

"You What?"

Thanks for writing, No Really

Recently in your mag you dissed me. You're gonna pay. Mwahaha!
da bagel boy, email
Yes, we did diss you.

And we'll do it again. . bagels are *rubbish*.
I can't stop laughing at the funny jokes in your magazine. Go Milf and

Nathan! Yeaaah!
Salty Dog, MySpace
But... but Milf doesn't even write anything. Unless you're laughing

at his wonderful designs, which would make you a lunatic.
I saw the drunken pics of the team on the

Prince charming

Why isn't *Prince Of Persia: Revelations* on PSP called *Prince Of Persia: Warrior Within* when they are the same game? **Anon**

To be honest, we've lost track of the *Prince Of Persia* series ourselves. There are so many different versions on so many consoles that we've basically given up and refer to them simply as, in order of release, *The Good One, The One Where It All Went Wrong, The Average One* and *The PSP Ones.*

Update to remember

Is it true that the first *Tomb Raider, Metal Gear Solid* and *Silent Hill* are going to be released on PS3 with better graphics? **Anon**

Not that we've heard. But *Tomb Raider* is being remade on PS2 as *Tomb Raider Anniversary* and an *MGS* remake was released for GameCube called *The Twin Snakes*. We'd love a PS3 version of the original *Silent Hill* though.

From the news desk

DRAGON QUEST ARE COME OUT IN PS3 **Anon**

Are it? Wonderful!

Private disc

Hi, I love the mag, but do you think we will ever see a magazine with a free UMD disc? **Jim (from 'the toon')**

The Official PSP Magazine, our sister mag, comes with a free demo UMD from time to time. Check that out.

Text us Send to 87103 and start your message with 'PSM3'.

Card days night Even if you can't use your Solo card, under 18s can still download free demos and play games online.

Tetra cack

I think that you are usually spot on with your views on most things, but in your history of *Final Fantasy* you made a big boo-boo. You said that "Card game Tetra Master was abysmal". How could you say that? Tetra Master was brilliant! Have you forgotten the simple fun of getting a cool little card with a Cactuar on it, and the huge joys of beating that little git in Alexandra whos just taken all your best cards in a perfect victory?

Admittedly getting loads of the same cards off of monsters while levelling up was a bit of a bitch, but occassionally they gave you a new card that was amazing.

Final Fantasy IX is the best in the series and I can't think of anything serious thing wrong with it.

James Nelms, email

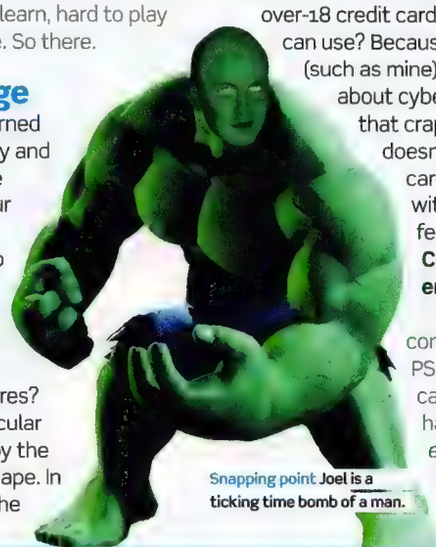
Remarkably, we had three letters defending Tetra Master, so we thought we'd better respond. Non-*Final Fantasy* fans can skip to the next letter. Tetra Master was a needless overcomplication of *Final Fantasy VIII*'s Triple Triad. TT worked because it was easy to pick up, but difficult to master. TM was hard to learn, hard to play and hard to love. So there.

Rage gauge

I am very concerned about the safety and wellbeing of the PSM3 team. Your lives are at risk each day you go to work. What deathtrap, you may ask? Killer PS2's? Faulty building structures? Nope, this particular predator goes by the name of Joel Snape. In issue 83 alone, he contemplated murder on four separate occasions, and then strategised as to which American tourist he would 'punch first'. Are you really safe having this kind of man in your vicinity day after day? Not to mention the fact that he only reviews brutal fighting games and gorefests. So, please, before it's too late, lock this dangerous man up before he (inevitably) crosses the line from murderous fantasy to reality. The next day at work could be your last if you don't act now.

Michael Dunphy, email

Joel's like this all the time, even in real life. He's constantly wittering on about fighting people, killing people and hurting people. And he spends his nights watching DVDs about fighting and listening to aggressive Japanese rock music. Well, that's an exaggeration. He doesn't listen to *that* much aggressive Japanese rock music.



Snapping point Joel is a ticking time bomb of a man.

Money troubles

What credit cards does the PS3 accept for use with online gaming and the Playstation Shop? Does the Solo credit card that under-18s can have work with it, or do you have to use a normal over-18 credit card that only adults can use? Because some parents, (such as mine) are paranoid about cyber-theft and all that crap, so if the PS3 doesn't accept the solo card, I might be without online features!

Chris Bateman, email

Sony have not confirmed if the UK PS3 accepts Solo cards or not. We'll have a full report on *everything* you need to know next month.

CRT. What's going on? I am connecting the PS2 to the TV through a good gold-plated RBG SCART lead, so I really cannot see why it is like this. It's so frustrating! I know PS3 games should look good, but why do PS2 ones look so bad? I didn't expect the games to look worse! Pfft. What a pain.

Timbo, Leicester

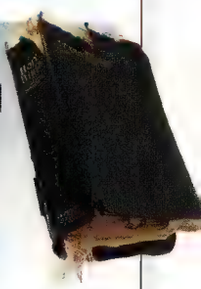
That's the thing about LCD televisions – they make PS2 games look shit. Even with the world's most expensive RGB SCART lead, *Canis Canem Edit* will look blurry, fuzzy and indistinct. If you want the best possible picture from your PS2 you're better off with a CRT. There is, however, a solution – check out the HDTV player from Madcatz over on page 105.

'Best' of the Blog

Visit PSM3MAG.COM and have your say

"I just completed The Bible Game."

Posted by: testifybrother



"I like England, but the weather is always rubbish. I like the London Dungeon. I almost shat myself in there."

Posted by: Anonymous

"I really want to smell my games."

Posted by: Chris

'Best' of the Rest

Elsewhere, **Freshmetal** responds to our Wish List 2007 post. "Psycho Mantis has to return in *MGS4*. He could analyse your hard drive, taunt your poor scores in your downloadable games and make a comment on how the Sixaxis is immune to his powers 'cause it has no rumble!" While **Petto Iceland** talks weather. "I want to see proper weather in *GTA4*. Like snow where the cars leave tracks like in *MotorStorm*."

Blog We post every day. Go to psm3mag.com for free PSM3.

PSM3 blog. They were hilariously awful! **Metal Kitten, MySpace**
But... but those are our faces. We can't help it.

Would you judge me if I said I loved you? **Freelance gynaecologist, MySpace**

You're making us feel peculiar.
What's up, PSM3? Dirty electro bangers. **Mesh, MySpace**

That sounds rude.
I spent seven hours on a bus today. **Michael, MySpace**
It could've been worse - you could've spent seven hours *under* a bus.
Where the heck can I find *Silent Hill 4*?

Dr Salvador, email
You won't get it new, so try the pre-owned section of any games shop. Easy.

Typing just by waving a stick about is magic on bread. **Ronnie Corbett, MySpace**

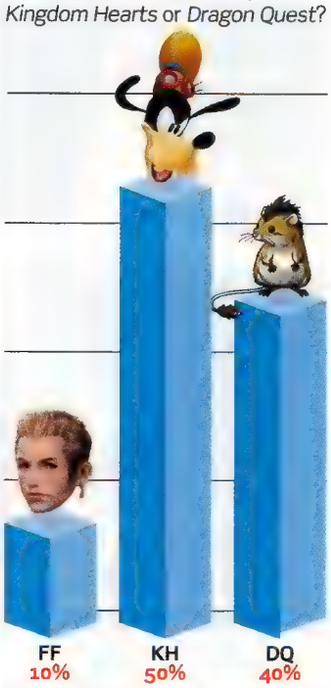
Ronnie here has bought himself a Wii, which is fine. But make sure you get a PS3 too, eh?

Your Space

Poll Position

We ask. You Answer

This Month Best RPG – *FF*, *Kingdom Hearts* or *Dragon Quest*?



Next Month Best FPS; *Killzone*, *Call Of Duty* or *Half-Life*?

MySpace Cast your vote at http://www.myspace.com/psm3

New speak

right im sick and tired of this woot shit. omg these words are soo l33t.what kiss my ass. luk psm3 i am very upset in you.first you were the best mag eeeevaaaahhhhh n nuw ur lyk l33t n woot n imma pwrn u. naah psm3 i aint likin this at all. look heres a dictionary of real SLANG
1.bust(beat up)
2.sfe(safe)(hi)
3.kl(cool)
4.ity(ight)
5.wuu2(what u up to)
6.grimin(thats cool)
7. wa gwan(hiya)
8.og(friend)
NOW THATS REEL WORDS THERE. BTW WA GWAN.

Andrew Macpherson, Bedford

If those are 'REEL WORDS' then we'd rather stay in the dark ages of slang, thanks. Oh, sorry, we'd better respond in your 'language' – "waaa gwaan, dem werds is well bumms ya bwastarrrd". By the way, Dave would like to ask you all to spell-check your letters and punctuate them correctly, so he doesn't have to correct them himself. He couldn't even be arsed to do this one, mind. The lazy scumbag.

Flower power

Poor Andy. Why do the PSM3 team bully you so? Just because you can't grow any facial hair. It must drive you to despair! I mean, yeah, he may have a few lady-like features, but who cares? Andy, come out of the closet. Admit that you're as gay as a flower bed. It's OK. We understand.

Joshua Titley, email

Andy claims that all the references to him being 'a gay' are the doing of Dave, who is pursuing some kind of vendetta against him. But we all know that he puts them all in himself, and that he really does take two bottles into the shower. If you know what we mean. And we're sure that you do.

Car wars The PS3 version of *NFS: Carbon* was barely worth playing – it's just another version of the PS2 game with marginally better looks.

Version aversion

Why do EA keep releasing dozens of versions of the same game for different consoles? I heard *The Godfather* was coming out on PS3, and that it's basically the same again.

Harris, email

Techno Notice

The Robo-Mind answers your tedious technical questions

Dear Robo-Mind

I'm having problems signing up for the PlayStation 3 online network. The website said it sent me a confirmation e-mail, but that was about a month ago and I still don't have it. Boo!

Alvin Singer, email

"Oh look, more questions from the meat-men. According to those brainless idiots at PSM3, this happened to them twice. The first time the mail went to the spam folder of their Google Mail account, then the second it never came at all. So check your spam, then try and try again if it's not there, you futile flesh wallet.

Mail delay If the mail doesn't come straight away, just try again. It'll come eventually.

Dear Robo-Mind

I was wondering why games are always made for right-handed people. They could at least let you choose whether you want to play left or right-handed... it's so stupid.

Scott Boyd, email

"Haw haw haw! It never ceases to amaze me how preposterous your flimsy bodies are. Both my robo-pendages are as strong as each other. Some games – about 60% – let you change the controls to suit your pathetic southpaw needs, but it's true that a lot don't cater for wrong-brained lefties. And rightly so. Fzzt!"

Dear Robo-Mind

How far will PS3's Wi-Fi capability reach? The distance from my computer to my room is about 14 metres, plus it's through a wall.

Nicola Beaton, email

"Fahahhrahazat! Sorry, that was my mind-circuits just trying to compute how STUPID your question is. The PS3's Wi-Fi will reach that far, so don't you worry. You horrid, horrid oik."

Dear Robo-Mind

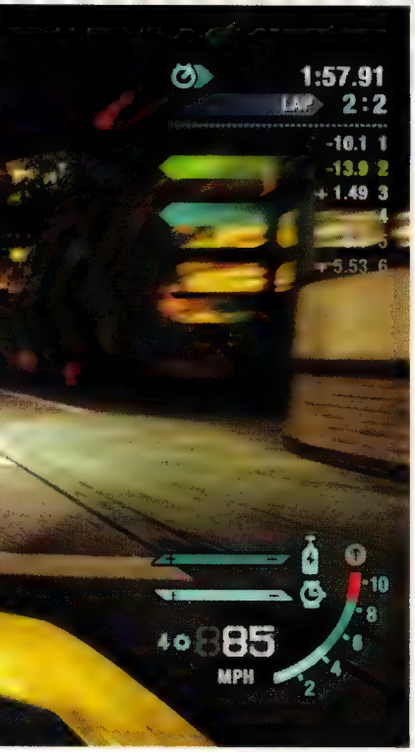
Will PS3 games actually be 100% region free? Will there be any restrictions on online content?

Philip Tomlinson, email

"Yes, all PlayStation 3 games are region free. But as for online content – some things will be available on the Japanese and US online stores before the UK, so add-ons and other extra content might not be around for you to download immediately. Philip? You humans *do* have foolish names. Kwzt."

Email us Got a question? Email it to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject 'Robo'.

"Joel contemplated murder four times"
Michael Dunphy email

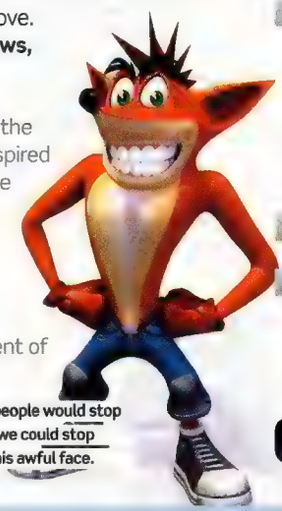


Because the games are *so* unique they feel it's their duty to share them. Or because it makes them money.

Crash test dummy

I'm here to settle the *Crash Bandicoot* debate once and for all. The first *Crash* was one of the very first games I played. Now you, as adults, might think he's a mutated orange weasel, but when you're six years old you only see him as a colourful, bouncy character who jumps and spins around bashing loads of enemies. And I loved it. If it wasn't for him, I might not have moved onto better platformers like *Ratchet* or *Jak*, which you love.
Matthew Andrews, email

Oh, we do appreciate how the *Crash* games inspired future greats like *Jak* and so on, but the fact remains that he's a cackling idiot. He's the gaming equivalent of Joe Pasquale.



Crash money If you people would stop going on about him, we could stop printing pictures of his awful face.

UK myspace — PSM3's Top Eight

a place for friends
Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and join us

MySpace readers who rock our world

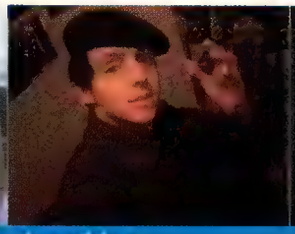
Crisps

ABOUT HIM
"I'm Chris, a 22-year-old male from Glasgow. I passed my driving test, but I don't have a car. Gutted!"

INTERESTS
"I love cycling, wrestling, going out, *Pro Evo* (currently in the top 20 best players in Scotland), eggs, cool T-shirts, my hair, modding my PC, dragons."

CURRENTLY PLAYING
Pro Evolution Soccer 6

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8
Andy insisted that we include a Glaswegian in the top eight this month, plus Nathan remembers Crisps from the *PES* finals.



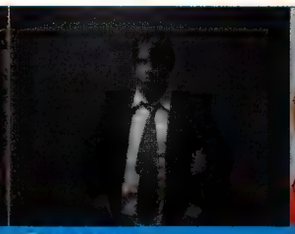
Jagerking

ABOUT HIM
"Hey, pricks and hoes. I'm Lucas and I'm the kind of guy who's too laid back to care about anything."

INTERESTS
"Music is the best form of entertainment ever. I love hardcore, metal and rock. I like some rap too. I also don't mind Australian bands like Butterfingers. My favourite type of car has got to be Fords. They are intense rides."

CURRENTLY PLAYING
Resident Evil 4, GTA: San Andreas

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8
Fords are ace. Our uncle has a Ford Granada and it's an *intense* ride. In fact, we were ghost riding the whip on it last night. We also like Harrison Ford and Ford in Devon.



Superguy

ABOUT HIM
"Faster than a speeding... er, able to leap over small tables. Stronger than a rubber band. It's me, Sean Tilley, Superguy. I love singing and getting up in front of people and making them happy. I like sci-fi novels by Isaac Asimov."

MUSIC
"My Chemical Romance, Evanescence, All American Rejects, Sum 41, Hawthorne Heights, Alkaline Trio, The Fixx, Staind, Green Day, The Rolling Stones, Casting Crows."

CURRENTLY PLAYING
Guitar Hero 2

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8
He's the world's worst superhero, and he dresses smartly.

Hamad

ABOUT HIM
"I'm studying graphic design at Salford uni. It's aiiight. I like meeting new people."

INTERESTS
"Hip-hop, fashion, PS3, games, graffiti, other people, cars, money. I like films too. My favourites are Scarface, Training Day, Shaun Of The Dead, Terminator, Anchorman.

CURRENTLY PLAYING
Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8
We like his pic and how he's clutching a bottle of Hennessy, the gangsta's drink of choice. We drink it all the time. *All the time.*

Iky Da 1

ABOUT HIM
"I am the best. I am the ONE."

INTERESTS
"My name is Iqbal, or Iky for short. I like boxing, football and listening to rap. I am of Pashtun heritage and I study psychology."

CURRENTLY PLAYING
Scarface, Need For Speed Carbon

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8
For his varied music tastes; Eazy E, Ludacris, Ice Cube and... My Chemical Romance? Eclectic to say the least. And he has his own logo.

Oni

INTERESTS
"I like music, films, writing, singing, drawing, idioms and martial arts. I listen to Nujabes, Kagrra, Dir en Grey, Despairs Ray, Daita, Jay Chou, L'Arc en Ciel and more. I watch Lost, Family Guy and Friends."

FILMS
"Some of my favourites are Windstruck, Wonderful Days and anything by Ryuhei Kitamura."

CURRENTLY PLAYING
DMC3: Special Edition, Ico

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8
He's the only genuine resident of Japan on our entire friends list, and we too like Japanese rockers Dir en Grey. Well, Joel does.

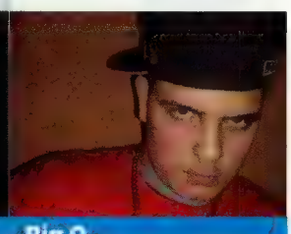
JOEY K!

ABOUT HIM
"I'm from the mighty city of London. I listen to metalcore, screamo and breakcore. I can only eat food with teaspoons – not tablespoons. They bash my teeth."

MUSIC
"Bands I've seen live: Deftones, The Cribs, Dragonforce, Enter Shikari, Franz Ferdinand, Soulfly, Stone Sour, Tool, Trivium."

CURRENTLY PLAYING
GTA: Vice City Stories

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8
We hate tablespoons too. Not because they bash our teeth but because someone once tried to stab us in the neck with one.



Big Q

ABOUT HIM
"I'm the world's biggest hip-hop fan. I'm also the world's biggest Game fan and my profile is DOPE. I like basketball, hip-hop and watching G-Unit TV."

LIKES
"I like books with pics that are about gangs and a few others."

CURRENTLY PLAYING
Tekken: Dark Resurrection

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8
Because he has the flashiest, most image-laden MySpace profile we've ever seen. it really is dope, just like he says. Yeah! Dope!

MySpace Want to make our Top Eight? Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and send us a friend request. We'll welcome you on board shortly.

You What?

Anyone got *Fantavision* yet? Have you seen those firework graphics?! I thought they were going to come out of the mag and blow my head off.
The Lemon, Myspace

Er, have you just stepped out of a time portal? *Fantavision* came out shortly after the Ice Age. Well, thereabouts.

I forgot my tie, lost my locker key, my pencil case got stolen (and it had about eight toppers in it), my calculator nicked and someone hid my bag.
Michael, MySpace

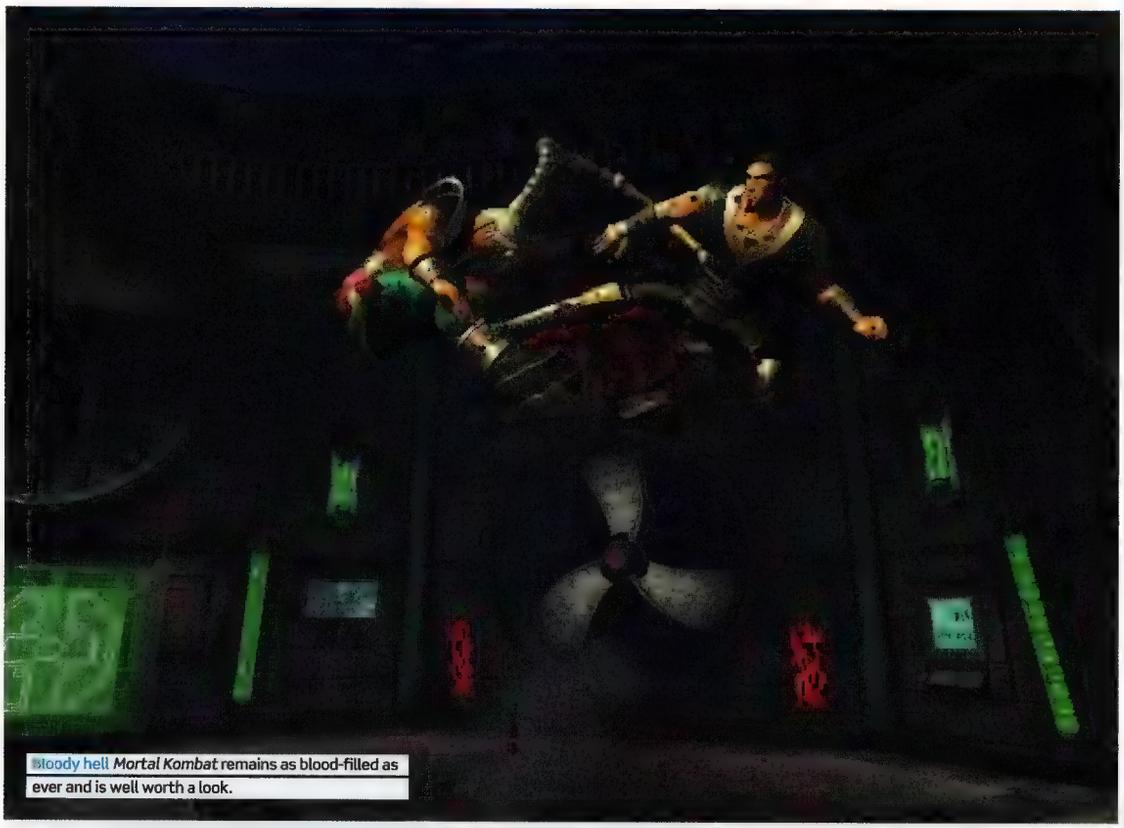
Do you go to a school or a borstal? Played *LocoRoco*...

Another soul brightened by the glorious multi-coloured joy of *LocoRoco*. Aaah. Happy 2007 from the dark side.
Jedi Shroud, MySpace

But if you're on the dark side, shouldn't that be "have a miserable 2007"? You're no Sith.

Reader Critic

Disagree with our reviews? Then show us how it's done



Bloody hell *Mortal Kombat* remains as blood-filled as ever and is well worth a look.

MK: Armageddon

The best *Mortal Kombat* game yet? Kieran Wade seems to think so

Reader Profile

Name **Kieran Wade**
Location **Rotherham**
Fave games ***Final Fantasy, Dark Chronicle***
About me **An easy-going person who doesn't get mad at much. I love to play guitar, listen to music and play games. I'm still at school, being bored mostly.**

There are over 60 characters to choose from in *Mortal Kombat: Armageddon*, each with four or five special attacks and entirely different moves to each other. This varies the game a lot and makes it fun to experiment with each character's move sets. Then there's Motor Kombat, a racing game that rips off the *Mario Kart* games, but it feels like Midway have rushed this just so they can get extra content in there. The racing feels out-dated and lacks in something... fun.

As for the core gameplay, however, it's *Mortal Kombat* at it's best. As said, each character has there own unique move sets, but what they don't have are their own Fatalities – this time around, you make up your own finishing moves by, for example, simply pressing →, →, Ⓐ at the end of a battle followed by ←, ←, Ⓐ. Each combination has a different vicious attack attached to it, and this keeps the game fresh. There's also a way to juggle your opponent in the air for a short time with your sword, before jumping up to them and continuing to attack them in air. The fights contain a *lot* of blood too. Very nice. However, even if you have the game on max difficulty, it doesn't really prove a challenge.

The visuals have improved a little on the previous *Mortal Kombat: Deception* – OK, it's nothing drastic, but these days, PS2 graphics can't really get much better, can they? The music and voice acting are brilliant too, and set the mood perfectly. This gem of a game is definitely worth playing. Absolutely classic stuff. **Kieran Wade**

Reader Verdict

Overlooked and unloved, but easily one of the best beat-'em-ups on PS2. **92**

@ Email us Subject 'Critic' to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Or post a review to the usual address.

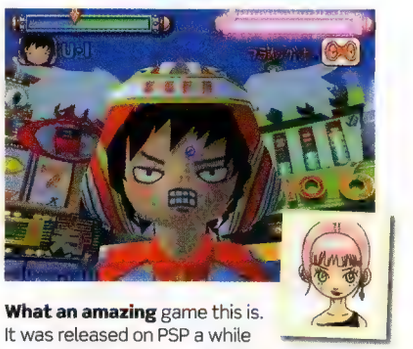
The Godfather

Gory violence excites Ben Badger here

Sure, the game has some faults, but it really is excellent. It has all the real faces of the actors (except Pacino), unlike *Reservoir Dogs*. The voice acting is really grand and the shooting system works better than in *San Andreas*. However, the driving is the main problem, but even though it has its problems it's still manageable and the car chases are fun. Also, when Sonny gets shot it looks just like it did in the film. The hand-to-hand combat isn't perfect, but you can do things that you couldn't do in *GTA*. You can grab people and leave them in a wheelchair so children can call them a cripple and also smash people through windows. The executions are very brutal and fun – I got a shock when I saw how very violent they were. A gory and excellent game. **Ben Badger** **75**

Gitaroo Man

Some love for a cruelly-ignored classic



What an amazing game this is. It was released on PSP a while ago, but personally I like the PS2 version better because you don't have to suffer the PSP's rubbish buttons. Anyway, in this game you are a sort of superhero who uses a magical guitar to battle evil monsters. It's a rhythm action game, a bit like *Space Channel 5* and suchlike, but you have to use the analogue stick to follow a bar as it moves across the screen. If you mess up your note, it doesn't play properly and you lose points. So basically your goal is to get through a song and hit every note. The songs are amazing and mix a lot of styles, but it is mostly guitar rock. The story is a bit stupid, but it is very weird and Japanese, so if you like that sort of thing... A good challenging game with an awesome soundtrack. **Lisa Criswell** **87**

"Resistance? You can buy a 360 and Gears now..."
Nathan Barrett gets impatient with PS3's delay

Call of Duty 3
War is hell, but it makes a good game

Now this is what a war game should be like. This is one of the most atmospheric games I have ever played. You really get immersed in the action and it's like playing a scene right out of a war film like Saving Private Ryan. The settings are a bit samey – villages and forests and so on – but there are great scenes where things explode and you get flanked by tons of Germans, so it's always exciting. The bits where you have to plant bombs and shake off soldiers are quite interesting, but I would rather play them on PS3 with the tilting pad, because bashing the buttons is a bit tiring.

This is a strong shooter with great tactical combat and lush graphics. It feels like you are part of WW2, and it's the closest you will get to being a soldier serving during a world war. Probably.

93

Harry Deanfield

PSM3 You were so right!
Reader love

"As good as the PS2 version, but you can take it anywhere. Awesome game."
Darren Pike, email

Tekken PSP
We said "Home console-quality scrapping that doesn't hurt your thumbs. Essential for fight fans."
PSM78 | Justin Towell | 89%

"Pointless. OK, but not enough new content to be perfectly honest."
Harajuku, email

PSM3 You were so wrong!

YouTube The Video Zone
Out there gamer vids from the cyberdepths

Dance Dance Revolution genius by windstreak20

JIVE At first you may be wondering why this is so special, but when the kid starts dancing you'll know why we featured it here. We like when he grabs the rails and does a flip. What a guy. http://snipurl.com/14xuq

Splinter Cell: Zidane by ng21

VIOLENT We're not sure if this is official or a fan-made mod, but this video shows a 'special' move in *Splinter Cell: Double Agent* that mimics Zidane's famous headbutt. http://snipurl.com/170qy

Resident Evil 2 scare-fest by dakaisaku

FEAR This is one of a series of *Resident Evil* 'highlight' movies on YouTube presented by a squeamish Japanese man who shrieks and wails whenever a zombie appears. Hilarious. http://snipurl.com/170qv

Mortal Kombat fatality reel by Traestar

GOREFEST The best things about the *MK* games are the fatalities, and now you don't even have to play the game to see them all in action – this eight-minute vignette of pain does the job. http://snipurl.com/170r7

@ Email us Created your own brilliant fan vid? Or just found a game you want to share? Email psm3@futurenet.co.uk and tell us all about it.

ON THE DISC
FIFA and PES PS3 on the disc as and when...

Reader Challenge

Pit your skills versus our fiendish test

DO THIS!

FIFA 07: Match Of The Century...

Recognise this chap? That's Ronaldinho, obviously, and we want you to defeat him and his Barcelona team by as many goals as you can. Six-minute halves, World Class difficulty. The catch? We want you to play as comedy League Two outfit, MK Dons.

Yes, that's a touch difficult, we know, but you can do it. Even if you only scrape together a 2-1 win, it might be worth entering, such is the nature of the challenge (and the tight deadline). Make sure you record yourself setting the menus to World Class difficulty, though – so we know you're not cheating. Biggest winning margin takes the spoils.

Game *FIFA 07*
Challenge **Beat Barca with MK Dons.**
Deadline **February 23 – so get cracking!**

WIN THIS!

Courtesy of our friends at The Next Level at Game.co.uk, the top 10 PS2 games can be yours!

GAME

Game.co.uk are the nation's favourite online games store. Established in 1996 they've sold over 40 million games to gamers throughout the world and are masters of fast, safe delivery and bargain rock-bottom prices. When it comes to securing day one new releases The Next Level at Game is the only place we trust. Why not give them a try? You know it makes sense.

www.game.co.uk

HOW TO TAPE

1 Start Here

Plug your PS2 into the back of your video/DVD recorder. Choose the AV input channel on your video and you should see your PS2 on your TV.

2 Do your best

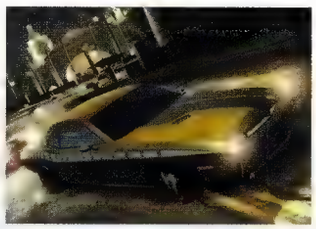
Now just record away. Any tape or DVD on any format welcome.

3 Send it in

Write us a note explaining what's on your tape or disc. Don't forget your name and address. And include a pic of yourself – or email psm3@futurenet.co.uk, subject line 'PIC OF ME'.

LAST MONTH'S WINNER!

Well done to **Vincent 'Boost' Jerrard** whose frankly amazing *NFS* Canyon Race time – 27.62 seconds – was the absolute best of the bunch. Prizes are headed your way, and we'll put your entry on a future DVD.



Post: Put your tape in an envelope, mark it '*Fifa 07* Challenge' and send to the usual address. That's PSM3, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW y'knew. Entries in by February 23

"HD televisions magnify PS2's weak points"
Timbo Leicester

Beat The Team

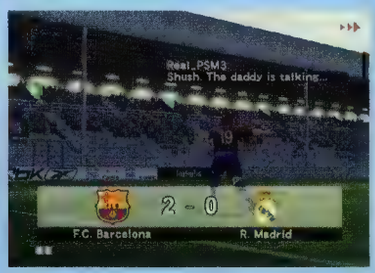
Think you're good enough at PES6? Take on PSM3 and find out...

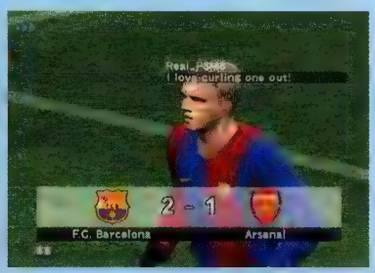
"Salubrious tidings, foul incompetents. Your efforts, frankly, failed to measure up this month with three... well, we won't spoil it, but let's just say our egos have inflated like Phileas Fogg's hottest air balloon in an area of low pressure."

1 PSM3 (1) vs Joe2 (0)
"We were so pleased with Rooney's penalty tap in to secure an edgy one-nil win, we're not even going to mention that you might have vanquished us by the same margin in a practice match. That's the problem with practice matches. Sometimes you don't even know you're playing one."

2 PSM3 (2) vs DBvGames (1)
"Your lurid attempt to promote your business using the medium of online *PES* – heaven forbid we should stoop so low – was matched only by your skills, or lack of. We deliberately deflated the fun balloon after Gudjohnsen's second, allowing you a consolation."

3 PSM3 (3) vs LJAM (1)
"Our opponents may be Spanish, but our superior knowledge of Catalan led to a fluent 3-1 victory, with some sweeping wing play and rapier-crisp finishing. "Buen Partido", you say? Why not just 'Auf Wiedersehen' back to Madrid for such an embarassing grasp of all things European."





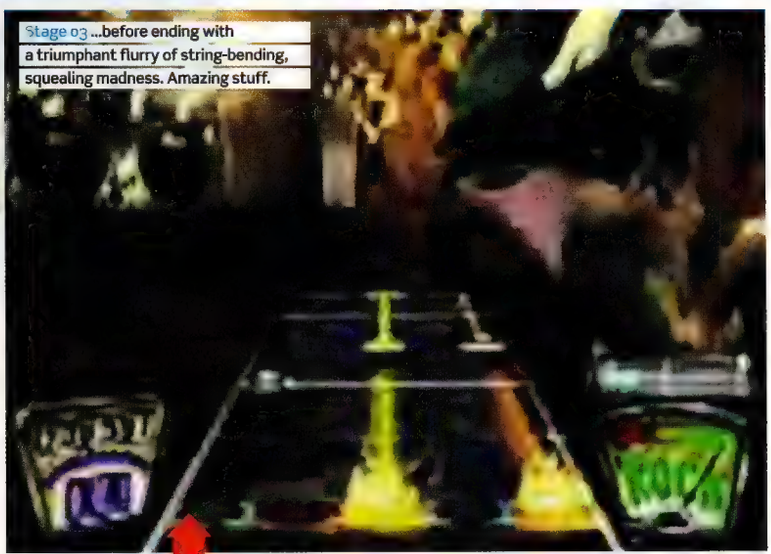
Final score PSM3 United: 3 - You Lot: 0
"Three giant victories and only the most delicate whiff of duplicity. Another Machiavellian month for PSM3."

Online Want to make Nath and Dan D cry like petulant babies? Then keep an eye on www.psm3mag.com and we'll announce our next online date.

Look! I Can Do This!

Send us your amazing gaming feats and we'll send you some games

Name Tiger Hawk
Game *Guitar Hero 2*
Achievement Freebird, the hardest, fastest, most relentlessly unforgiving song in *Guitar Hero 2* gets mercilessly trounced by Tiger Hawk in this fantastic video. A flawless intro section gives way to the notoriously difficult 'fast bit' in the middle, which he fumbles with once or twice, but ultimately tears through like a pro. Sterling work, sir.



PSM3 Verdict
Not only is Hawk's fingerwork mesmerising, but his final mighty score of well over 330 thousand points is similarly impressive. This is the kind of video we like – pure showmanship, pure skill. **92**

Post Mark your tapes 'I Can Do This' and send it to us at the usual address.

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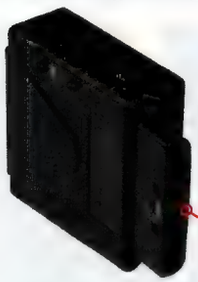
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Pub THQ | **Dev** Kaos Studios
Players 1-16 | **Genre** War
FYI The future of squad games?

ON THE DISC
Frontlines will be on the disc next month

HOW WWIII WILL BE WON BY REMOTE CONTROL

Control the skies from the ground in *Frontlines: Fuel Of War*...

Listen: *Frontlines* is not a political statement. Yes, it takes place in a not-too-distant future. Yes, the scenario of the Caspian Sea's oil reserves being plundered by rival coalitions from the West and East is actually fairly believable. And yes, it's jammed with futuristic tech – including remote controlled airborne drones – that's close to actually being on the market. But this isn't some plea to save oil and recycle: it's difficult to take environmental concerns seriously when you're razzing around in a jeep, firing nuclear bombs at will.

If the idea of battling through urban sprawl and bagging check points gets your trigger-finger twitching, that's probably because you've played the *Battlefield* series. New studio Kaos are no strangers to the franchise themselves – several of the team, including producer Frank DeLise, worked on *Desert Combat* – the popular PC mod of the game. It

looks like they're sticking to what they know best.

Ace of base

In the solo game, things kick off with a small squad of Western coalition soldiers flying to their new base of operations. Predictably, the base has been overrun and it's a matter of seconds before some wag puts a rocket up the gunship's tailpipe and forces a crash landing. From there, things get tricky – first there's the attempt to secure the crash site, then it's a question of taking territory so our brave boys can fire off a distress call from a radio tower.

What's most impressive about *Frontline* is the AI. Your team are smart, but the

Mortar the point The better armed drones are your low-risk tank-busting solution.

Throw me a drone Basic drones can be left hovering and checked in on as you approach the enemy.

Send in the drones

Frontlines' remote control drones are based on real army technology...

Aerial Drone

The most manoeuvrable drone, and open to every character type. Good for scoping out enemy positions – especially if you leave them hovering in place – but weaponless apart from a kamikaze style blow-self-up attack.

Mortar Drone

Size of a sheep, guns of a tank – the mortar's your weapon of choice for when you don't even want to leave the lampposts standing. Slow, but with a fire rate of six artillery-style shells every five seconds or so, getting into position's the only tricky bit.

Assault Drone

Like a remote-controlled car with a minigun mounted on top – a frightening combination of terrier speed and vicious stopping power. Best used for creating confusion in the sprint up to the base.

enemies are terrifying. Most basically, they'll respond to what you're doing – hole up and they'll try to flank you, but press the action button and they'll withdraw to cover or lead you into an ambush. Once, we were chasing an enemy trooper around a corner when he ran into three of his friends and took us down in a hail of bullets. They'll even respond to what's going on in their environment – leave a jeep lying around and they'll hop into it and chase you down.

The main way *Fuel Of War* improves on *Battlefield*, though, is in the 'frontline' dynamic. In *Battlefield*, flags are dotted all over the map, which makes taking and holding one about people-management and

Rubble ahead Buildings will take superficial damage, but can't be entirely destroyed. Typical.

Continued on page 52

How battle works

Control the frontline, win the war

When we played *Fuel Of War* only two maps were available, but they couldn't be more different in terms of content. One was a huge, open environment, packed with tanks and some of the fastest jeeps we've ever seen, favouring snipers, air support options and heavy weapons men. The other was a dense urban affair, full of skyscrapers but also sporting a few jeeps for fast movement. Certain bits of each environment are destructible – and chucking a cluster bomb throws up cumulonimbus-sized clouds of dust – but you won't knock buildings down, *Mercenaries*-style.

Fuel's gold For a game about a fuel crisis, an awful lot of oil goes up in billowing smoke.

THE FRONT LINE

Push up Where the action happens. This'll shift as the game unspools, but it's the only place to score points.

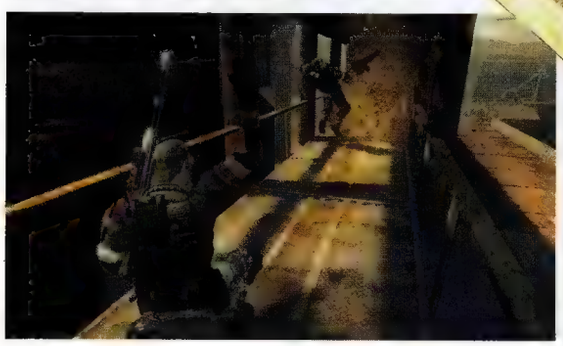
Green for go You can only tackle areas on the frontline – so the red zone is out.

DRONE SOLDIER

Robot wars Best left hanging back so they don't get shot while they're fiddling with their controls. Make good use of them.

Future Tech

One of *Frontlines'* most interesting features is the amount of on-the-cusp-of-happening technology crammed in. Favourites include the distance-specific airbursting grenade, the air-sucking clusterbomb and the remote railgun emplacements.



Frontlines: Fuels of War

"A huge, open environment with the fastest jeeps we've ever seen

Sharp shooters Spawning this far back isn't always advisable, but it lets you get your bearings and kit yourself up.

SNIPERS

MORTAR DRONE

Bomb the base These can hang back and still cause massive devastation.

TANK

:et's roll These spawn at preset points and can be bagged by either team. Getting a convoy together's a great feeling.

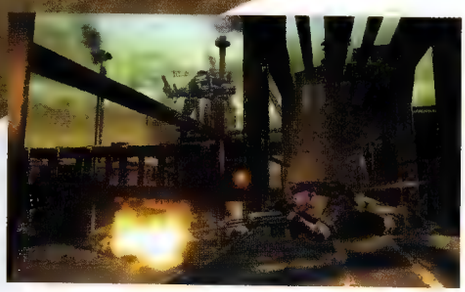
ROCKET SOLDIER

Brand new heavies These boys are vulnerable in close combat, but essential for taking down tanks. Protect them.

TROOPS

Hello Nasty Shotguns make men brilliant for infighting, but they're helpless against tanks.

Red for stop You need to 'push' back the frontline to reach, and claim, this area



Know your role

When you spawn in *Frontlines*, you've got two decisions to make about what sort of character you're going to be. Your Loadout decides what set of weapons you're going to get – with Sniper, Close Combat, Special Forces and Heavy Weapons to choose from (see the map to your left). Then there's your role – which determines what sort of extra support you can call in (see below). As you add kills in the course of a match, you earn extra 'role points', unlocking better and better weapons – so if you keep respawning as the same character type, you'll level up faster than if you keep on switching styles.

Ground Support

The best all-purpose pick, letting you drop an array of gun emplacements. Useful when you *really* don't want to let go of that flag you've just spent ten minutes capturing.

Air Support

Probably the most 'fun' class, which lets you drop anything from precision strikes and gunship fire to cluster bombs... and, eventually, a tactical nuclear strike.

Drone Support

The ones with the toys – from a simple remote drone, working up to a miniature tank. Of course, while you're fiddling about with pitch and yaw, you're vulnerable from behind.

Counter Measures

Counter measures players get warned about incoming missiles or drones, and can set off chaff or EMP blasts to nullify them. You'll want one of these boys if you're in a tank or chopper.

Chopper the morning You'll want a countermeasures man aboard gunships to avoid missiles.

luck as much as anything else – find an unattended spot and you can watch the points tick in without firing a shot. In *Frontlines*, you still capture flags, but there's one difference: the only flags that change hands are the ones on the border between the sides' territory. Once you've captured the two on the frontline of your own turf, the border gets pushed further up the map and you're free to plough into enemy terrain. Not only does this mimic the ebb and flow of a real gunfight – you don't want to stray too far into enemy terrain, and you can't respawn behind enemy lines – but it also centralises the action. Everyone heads for the frontline and, even if you take a flag, everyone around is going to be shooting at you.

Weapons of choice

Not that you're helpless, of course. *Frontlines* uses a combination of traditional kit and cutting-edge military tech to give you the sort of death-dealing options traditionally only available to Ming The Merciless. At the bottom end is your own kit – fave options here might include taking a flag, then smothering it in proximity mines and leaving it 'abandoned' for the opposition to blunder into. Then there are more advanced forms of nastiness – drones, for example, that can do everything from spy on enemy positions to acting as miniaturised air support. And then there's the drones' Actual Size equivalent – choppers and F-15s that can be called in to offer air support. Bring in a gunship and you'll see it hover in from a distance, dishing out hot lead and chewing the ground up like an angry god.

Come on you reds Each side has different kit – the Red Stars are less technical, with more clout.

As fleshed-out as *Frontlines* is, there's plenty to add before it hits PS3 in May. Weapons need tweaking and the sniper rifle improving, but this one looks like a worthy contender to the *Battlefield* crown. Just watch that petrol gauge...

Q&A

Joe Halper
Senior Producer

From real soldiers to AI ones, we talk *Fuels Of War*...

So somebody was telling us you were in the military...
I did military training. I used to work with Lockheed Martin, making training programs for the military. I also worked on a coastguard training project and the military saw the benefits of that. But you start to think about how to make these things interesting for soldiers who like to play videogames, so I'm used to thinking about it in that way. Then I got into games as a hobby, and then I got kind of addicted.

Starting with *Battlefield 1942*?
Yeah, that got me. Then I started Trauma Studios with Frank [DeLise, the game's producer], and then we moved on to research and development on *Battlefield 2*.

And then DICE bought Trauma...
Yeah, we did the feature set, the commander system and the artillery strikes on *Battlefield 2*, but then we got bought by DICE. And we didn't want to move out of New York, because a lot of talented people live in New York, so we formed a new studio.

So how's working with THQ?
Great, man. In 2005 we started out with 14 people, now we've got about 60 or 70. And we can talk to all of THQ's other development teams, so we can get their input. Like Relic have got a really good balance team, or if Volition or Cranky Pants have artists with some downtime they might help us out.

How realistic is some of the futuristic tech we've seen in *Frontlines*?
Well, a lot of it's based on technology that already exists. We've seen prototype versions of the drones in the games in operation. They do actually work, but I'm not sure when they're going to be used in real conflicts.

You said *Frontlines* is based on a 'speculative' vision of future events, and you've obviously read more about it than us. Be honest: are we all going to die?
Ha. Well, it's a pretty bleak vision of the future. The oil problem is definitely something we'd like to make people more aware of, but we're most interested in just making a fun game.

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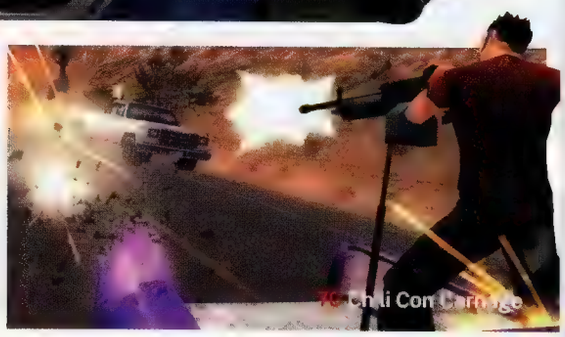

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"Find F1 dull? Judging by this, the drivers aren't having fun either..."

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PSM3 review scoring system

0-29
Rubbish
An absolute stinker and an insult to gaming. The makers should be ashamed.

30-49
Poor
Why did they do that? Some simple playtesting could have worked wonders.

50-69
All right
Hey it works, and we can see what they were trying to do. And that's about it.

70-84
Good
Worth playing, especially if you're a fan of the genre. It just lacks that touch of greatness.

85-89
Superb
This is the sweet spot. If a game scores in this zone it's definitely worth your money.

90+
Amazing
You must get this. Failure to do so would mean missing out on a real console classic.

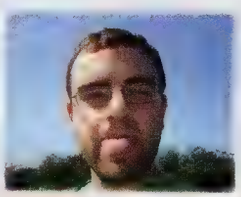
PSM3 BUY IT
The Award
If you see this, then you should buy that game.

The Team | Meet our regular reviews squad

Daniel Dawkins
Specialist in Extreme sports, and promotions.
Playing *Fight Night:* "Practising my knockouts for unruly staff.""

Nathan Irvine
Specialist in Sports games and furniture shopping.
Playing *Chili Con Carnage:* "That's a spicy enchilada. Erm..."

Andy Kelly
Specialist in Role-players, retro, and being an emo.
Playing *Silent Hill 2:* "It'd only be better with an emo soundtrack."



David Cook
Specialist in Shooters, platformers and feeling tired.
Playing *Scarface:* "My life is a lot like Tony Montana's. It bloody is."

Steve Williams
Specialist in Games with big shiny cars and bikes.
Playing *F1 2007:* "My journey to work is more exciting than this."

Justin Towell
Specialist in Beat-'em-ups and OH GOD IT'S A VAMPIRE!
Playing *Virtua Fighter 5:* "The ladies have such pretty necks..."

Disagree with our reviews? Email your outraged rant to **psm3@futurenet.co.uk**

PS2

Pub Atari | **Dev** Melbourne House
Price £30 | **Release** Feb 16
Multi-player 1-8 players (online)

ON THE DISC
We'll test *Test Drive* on the disc next time round!

KNOW IT NOW

- Cars from Saleen, Lotus and Jaguar? ☑
- Miles of sun-snogged tarmac? ☑
- An enormous load-free island? ☑
- Meddling with gear ratios? ☒

"Melbourne House have squeezed out something of a technical marvel"

PSM3 BUY IT

Test Drive Unlimited

The greatest showroom on Earth?

Test Drive Unlimited is quite unlike any other driving game. How on Earth could anyone think it possible – or sane – to try and replicate a tropical paradise etched with some 1000 miles of roads, featuring no load times when roaming, accurately-rendered cars from over two-dozen manufacturers (including detailed dashboard views) and a sickening number of race-based challenges? We don't know. But Melbourne House, thankfully, hasn't even stopped to get snagged on such a question – it's just knuckled down, crammed everything in from the Xbox 360 version and squeezed out something of a technical marvel.

Grand tourism-o

So, then, welcome to Oahu, a real Hawaiian island. It hasn't been replicated down to every fine detail, but its 1600 square kilometres of land mass is intact. That's bigger than *Just Cause*, fact fetishists, and it makes *Vice City* feel like *Vice Backwater*. And it's all yours to cruise across, taking in its highways, byways, slip-road junctions, coastal stretches and mountain switchbacks. Its variety is more in the finer details than any grand shifts – Oahu is, after all, largely a giant tropical forest speckled with settlements and other urban bits, grooved with an enormous road system – and whose overall diversity doesn't rival that of a typical rally game, even. If you're in this for a quick fix, then it can all look too much like looping countryside. If not, you'll soon begin to feel that there's simply no better place for *Test Drive Unlimited* to happen than a lush, wide-open driving arena where the sun

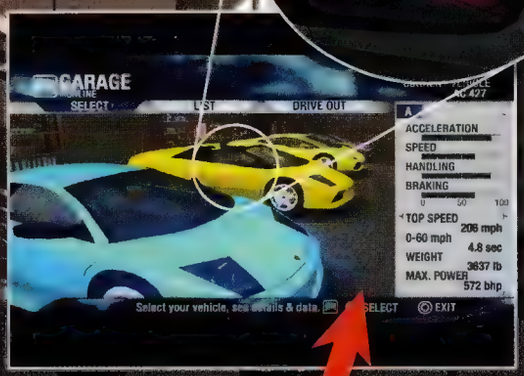
New look

Home comforts

Time to relax after a hard day's driving

Your homes – and you can own a good number of them – offer roomy garages, stats on your progress through the game and bits of news, such as which clubs have invited you to join them. Plus, your character gets to slump on the couch and just chill. Bless.

Tropicana Clubs Certain cars allow you to join clubs, and you can race other club members to increase standing and gain access to new vehicles and suchlike.



Slouch potato Slouching around at home displays the relaxed approach of *Test Drive*.

Double décor Every home has its own design, from studio flats to apartments costing millions.

never sets, a beautiful place where you'll want to fall in love all over again with your favourite supercars.

Hawaii you should care

And that's just it – the magic of *Test Drive Unlimited*, despite its feats as a piece of software, isn't instantly apparent. It's in the overall experience it's attempting to give you, and one you can only settle into after you've spent a few hours sussing that particular, laid-back, grown-up playboy lifestyle it offers. You drive in any direction just for the sheer joyous freedom of it, not because you're hunting for secret tokens or a hidden crocodile farm that unlocks helicopters. Work your way through the game's opening stretch – an auto-GPS system will guide you between challenges you've not completed, if you want – and start to bulk out your garage, and one of two things will happen. Either you'll drop the pad and start to crave something with more focus, or it suddenly all clicks into place, and you find yourself getting all excited about buying a new house (there are plenty) while smiling daftly as you sit in a car showroom, checking out the interior of each vehicle and making its windows go up and down, excited at the prospect of expanding your collection of motors and eager to take a new purchase out for an extended spin (or simply a time-limited test drive or rental, if you've not built up the cash). And if you become successfully hooked, then Oahu feels like a refreshing and roomy home, one where you can go from a lazy ocean drive to a foot-to-the-floor sprint along a motorway, stopping as and when you like to take part in any of the game's multitude of race and time-trial challenges, which can be teleported to whenever you've visited their location once. But the lack of variety in those events may once again sting those who crave a greater selection of things to do.

Stat bastard

In 30 hours of heated play we witnessed...

08 players in online races

30 car manufacturers

03 race-event difficulties

01 stupidly huge island

1000 miles of road

Flunk tha police

While its vehicles are high-powered, they're not high-maintenance in that you won't be needing to pass any license tests or mess around with optimal weight distributions to get the best out of them. The handling, while offering a tangible difference from car to car, feels like a good blend of sim-like discipline and arcade accessibility, but you'd best turn the traction aids off just to give your ride room to properly shake its ass. And there's a broad of a range of motors, from dawdling but sexy-revving retro classics, through to supercharged, drifting monsters. The biggest problem you'll face, though, is the police that turn up if you commit traffic

Progress report Race wins, drifts, exploring – they all earn Master Points, your key to progress.

Look both ways While the draw distances are impressive, there are still occasional blots, like the odd hillside whose textures aren't fully updated until you zoom past.

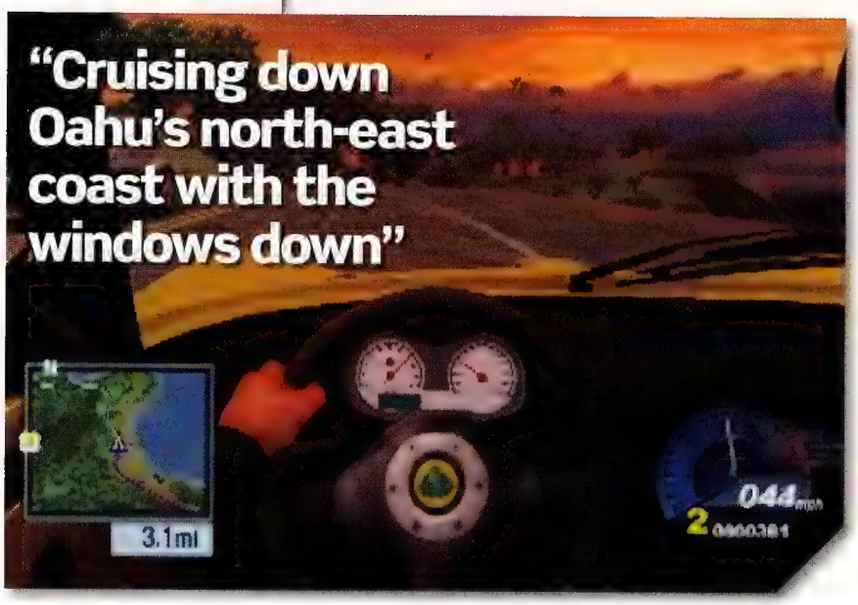
offences while roaming, who can easily turn *Test Drive* into *Testy Drive*, and you'll come to despise them as you roam Oahu. It's not as if driving well isn't it's own reward, there's just no reason for you to cause pile-ups, and the traffic is never thick enough for it to become *Grand Theft Auto*-style mischief. Maybe the cops were seen as a necessity, given the real-world location, but they're definitely the game's biggest dampener.

Seriously though, Atari – we demand, with fiery pitchforks, a PlayStation 3 version, as it could well be the greatest and freshest driving experience yet realised. But don't let that prospect put you off *TDU* on PS2. The fact that playing it gives you such a clear idea of how great a PS3 version would be is testament to what it's achieved: making a cutting-edge idea work well on a console that's now often seen as anything but. **Steve Bailey**

Multi-tapped

One thing we've not been able to cover here is online play, which is important enough to deserve it's own coverage in a forthcoming issue. Keep an eye out, then...

Fave Feature



PSP Review

Test Drive Unlimited

It's on PSP too y'know. But which version is best?

What have they changed?
Very little, really, which makes the PSP version stand as an equally sparkly accomplishment. The sentiments of the review over there have barely changed. What you won't get, however, is the in-car view, and loading times are a little lengthier – but that's understandable considering that Melbourne House have managed to squeeze the whole of Oahu onto one UMD. You know the pain men talk about when they pass a gallstone? That must've been what it was like. Not that we've any experience of that. Or anything. Yet.

Worth buying if you've got the PlayStation 2 version?
No, not at all. Not unless you have to feed your new-found *Test Drive Unlimited* addiction while in the bath.

Better or worse?
You're better off with the PlayStation 2 version, really. While the PSP iteration isn't one you can criticise in any greatly different manner (bar one – the police are still a pain the rear bumper and it's less slick in motion, but the lack of in-car view is definitely something that certain players will miss), but there's a possible hardware thorn. *Test Drive Unlimited* is the kind of game best enjoyed by losing yourself in it for several hours at a time, savouring your freedom in your favourite car before dipping in and out a few challenges, rather than skimming it here and there. It's all about the love, see? And playing PSP for a long enough time to truly wallow in *TDU*'s charms can be tough on the hands. But, still – these days you've probably got wrists like thick logs from playing *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories*, haven't you? So get stuck in, pronto.

84

PSM3 Verdict

***Test Drive Unlimited* contains...**
A boggling number of races | Homes to own | Irritating coppers | Some damn sexy cars

Overall A consuming driving experience that's not the most exciting, but makes up for it with its mellow side.

85

PS2

Pub 2K Games | **Dev** Climax
Price £30 | **Release** February 23
Multiplayer None

ON THE DISC
A review of this will be on next month's disc

Cool Move
Upgrading *Ghost Rider*'s moves with collected souls gives you access to increasingly more damaging fire combos pulled off with the Hellfire Chain. These sweeping attacks deal out massive burny pain to whole crowds of enemies at once.

Ghost Rider

How can a game starring a skeleton with his head on fire be so *dull*?

KNOW IT NOW

Bike-riding hero in flaming leather? ☑
Pedestrian third-person combat? ☑
The odd bike level to mix things up? ☑
Likeness of the film's star, Nicolas Cage? ☒

As if the back-catalogue of shoddy comic book adaptations on PS2 wasn't shameful enough, here's another uninspired and under-developed calamity for the pile. You play Johnny Blaze, a motorcycle stunt rider who sells his immortal soul to Mephisto (a sort of Marvel Universe version of the Devil) in order to save his terminally ill father from cancer. Bit of a short-sighted deal, really, especially when Mephisto turns round and offs his dad after he's cured him. As you'd expect, Johnny's a tad peeved by this, but by now he's been transformed into the soulless Ghost Rider, and he's trapped in Hell.

Naturally, he wants to leave, and the only way out is to fight. In Hell, as everyone knows, all fighting is done using samey combos that look like they've been nicked from *God Of War*. This is because one of *Ghost Rider*'s main weapons is the Hellfire Chain, which in action looks very much Kratos' Blades Of Chaos, both being firey chains swung about at high speed. Cynics would bandy about words like 'identical' and possibly 'copyright infringement'. The Hellfire Chain's activated with a tap of ◎, while △ throws a straight punch and several thumps of each will deliver basic linked attacks.

A blaze of glory?

It's about here you'll realise that – behind the flailing bluster – there isn't half the complexity to *Ghost Rider*'s combat as there is in Sony's Greek epic, just a relatively small range of repetitive attack sequences. These can be mixed up with aerial variations – press ⊗ to jump – and grapple moves, which are activated by pressing ◎ and become available when enemies are dazed. You can even upgrade your move list by cashing in collected souls, but they don't disguise the limitations of the system for long. Special moves fare a little better – collecting demon charge from despatched Hellspawn gives ammunition to your Hellfire Shotgun, which is triggered with R2 and delivers a satisfying blast. If you're feeling tactical you can also use L1 to block, though the game never really requires it of you – slightly more frantic combo-mashing is a perfectly viable alternative.

Ghost Rider does have a way of forcing you to mix up your play, though, in the form of level-determined shields on certain enemies. See, at the end of every stage you're given various ratings – for speed, damage dealt and so on – ranking from A

Whip it good Yes, all of Ghost Rider's attacks *do* look similar, don't they?

Burn rubber On a highway to hell. Well, out of hell, actually

to D (each given awful hell-related titles like 'Avenged,' 'Brutal,' and 'Condemned'). During the levels your fighting skill rating is constantly updated – the bar is filled if you vary your moves, improving your rating from 'Damned' upwards, and resets completely if you're hit. Certain enemies are protected by shields which can only be broken once you reach the skill level written on the shield itself. Not a bad idea, you might think – at least it's forcing you to mix up your tactics after all – but surely a better way would be to not make it so easy to get through the game by jumping in the air and hammering ⊡, rather than arbitrarily saying 'this guy's invincible unless you can reel off your whole move list without getting hit'.

Ghost beef

Happily there is some respite from the fighting during the bike-riding levels.

Again, there's nothing ground-breaking going on here, but the mix of combat – shooting and hand-to-hand – and simple obstacles – jump over, slide under – is diverting enough. Of course it's nowhere near enough to stop *Ghost Rider* being another totally forgettable licensed-game experience. With awareness high thanks to the film's release, to make a coin the game just has to be playable and presentable on a basic level. And that's all it gives us. Disappointing. **Nathan Ditum**

Fave Feature

PSP Review

Ghost Rider

It's on PSP too y'know. But which version is best?

What have they changed?

There's an entirely new racing section to the game, called Challenge Mode. Here you choose a character (Johnny Blaze, Classic and Movie Ghost Rider or even Marvel vampire-hunter Blade) and a course – tracks incorporating Marvel mainstays The Daily Bugle and The Vault prison are available – before getting down to the action. The action here being deathraces, with bike-to-bike melee combat as well as random weapon pick-ups in the style of *Mario Kart*. These range from the obvious (flaming shooty stuff) to the ingenious – 'confusion,' for instance, which flips your screen and forces you to control the race upside-down. Compared to the rest of the game this is good solid fun, especially as Challenge Mode is playable with four people over Wi-Fi. As well as straight-up racing there's also Eliminator – last place is ditched every lap – and Survivor – with time-extending checkpoints – to vary things a little.

Worth buying if you've got the PlayStation 2 version?

Not just for Challenge mode, decent as it is.

Better or worse?

Unusually, the PSP version of *Ghost Rider* actually has a little more to it than its PS2 counterpart. Story mode's all present and correct, and even improved in some ways. The over-complex end of level ratings are gone, replaced by challenge targets for time taken, souls collected and other tests (get a certain number of grapple kills, or off demons by running them over and so on). Also, it seems easier to gain and maintain your fighting skill level during normal play, so coming up against shielded enemies is less frustrating.

65

PSM3 Verdict

***Ghost Rider* contains...**

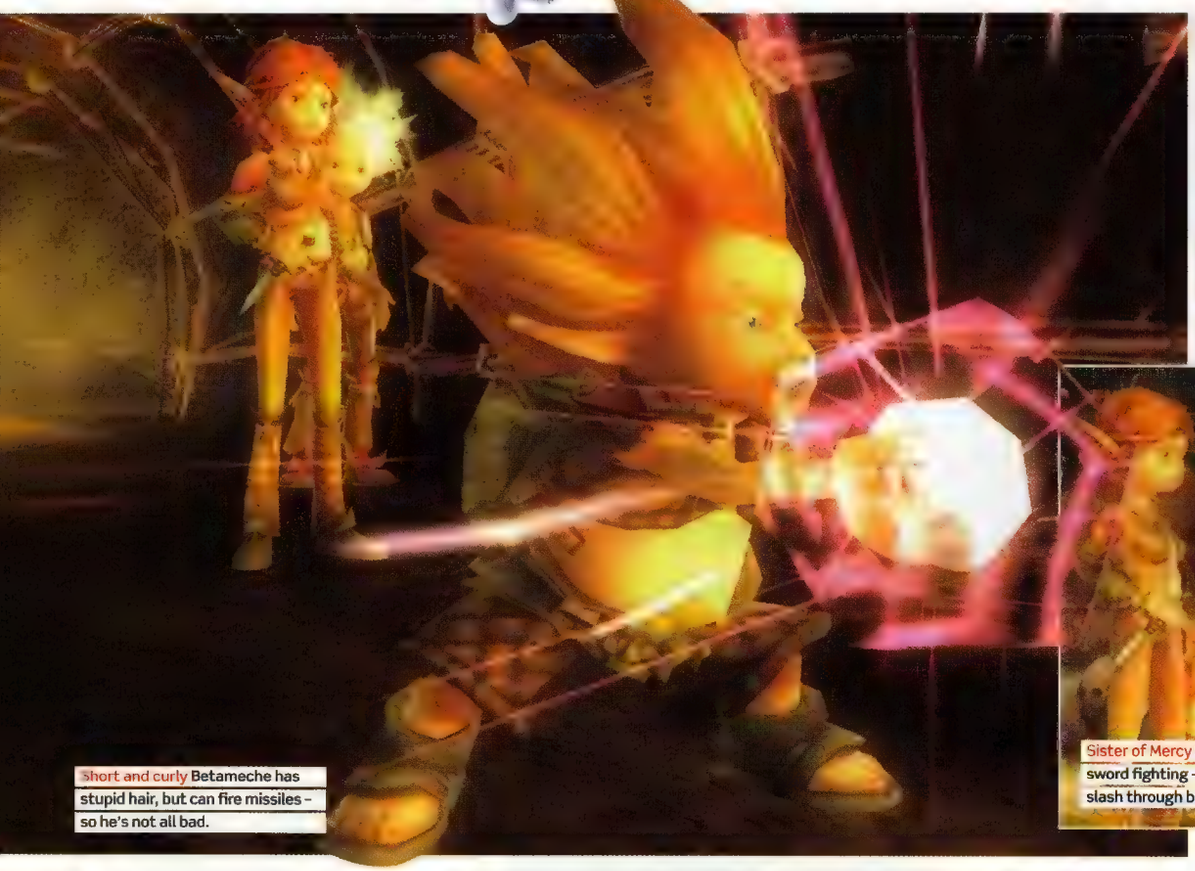
Boring fighting | Slightly less boring driving
A man with fire instead of a head

Overall An unambitious game which aims for mediocrity and nails it dead on. For fans only.

58

Pub Atari | **Dev** Etranges Libellules
Price £30 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
More of this tripe on the disc next month
/PS2/Reviews



Short and curly Betameche has stupid hair, but can fire missiles – so he's not all bad.

Mortal combat Combat consists of simple combos and attacks. You earn new moves as you progress.

Sister of Mercy Selenia is good at sword fighting – she can also slash through bramhles.

Arthur And The Invisibles

You'll see straight through this cheap tie-in

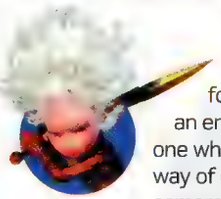
When we found out that famous French film director Luc Besson (whose work includes Leon, The Fifth Element and the upcoming *Hitman* movie) was making the big-budget CGI film upon which this game was based, it sounded like a promising start – until we found out that the film was about a bunch of tiny people who live in the garden and go by the name 'the Invisibles'. We can't remember the last time we played a game that made us feel so much like the new Victor Meldrew – we said "I don't believe it" more times than we could count. And we can count all the way to 31.

Weighed down Some better puzzles could be described as *Tomb Raider*-esque, were they not so fiddly.

With the exception of *Lego Star Wars*, we struggle to think of a game where having to swap between characters in order to solve puzzles doesn't end up being as tedious as An Audience With Alan Shearer. On paper, though, this probably sounded good: "I know, we'll make it so the one with the dandelion head can climb well, the stunted goblin can fire projectiles and hide behind a red flower shield and the girl can hack through spider webs." Unfortunately, there are loads of puzzles which involve two characters standing on switches to open doors for the third to walk through – only for you to then find yourself confronted with an obstacle unpassable by the character you're controlling, leading to more backtracking than a lost rambler and loads of Victor Meldrew moments.

Block party

The warning signs are there from the start, in the form of a tutorial that explains just *how* to weigh down those switches with blocks. Gosh, that's a tricky one, eh? Someone call Carol Vorderman. As you continue, it's hard to decide which of the unlikeable characters to default to – the one who has a gun that needs charging up for five seconds before it locks onto an enemy, the one with the sword or the one who *would* be able to climb out of the way of danger – were you able to move the camera in order to see said danger in the first place. Gnngh.



Arthur aggro Combat is OK. You learn moves as you play, so soon you're able to do attacks like the Triple Lollipop Shot.

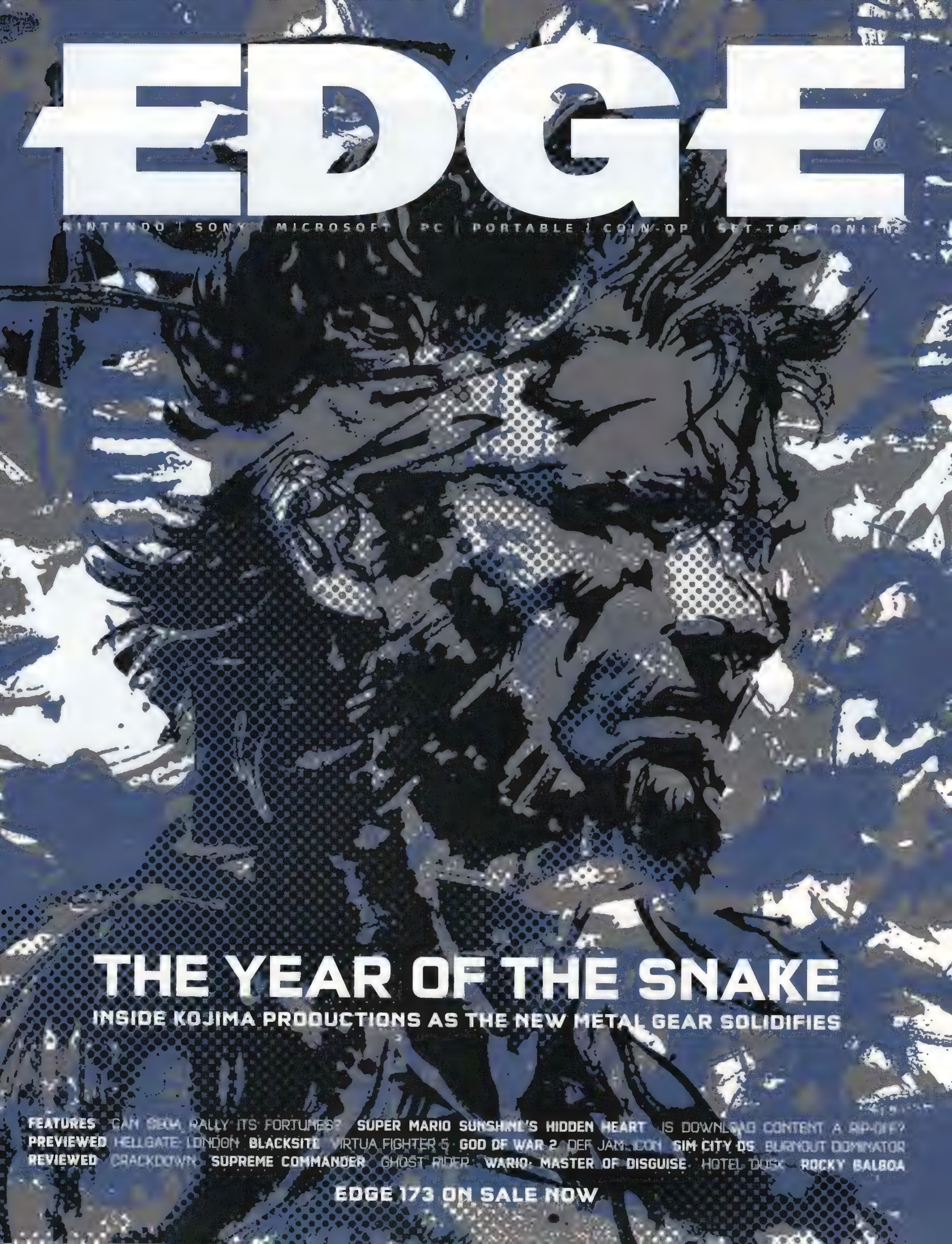
It's not all bad. Visually, Arthur is a garden wonderland, albeit populated by midgets who talk like upper-class Smurfs. And the combat's deceptively complex. Compared to some of the dirge that comes out for kids, *Arthur* has more depth than most. But it's not enough – the actual amount of fun you'll have playing is as miniscule as the Invisibles themselves. An adult-difficulty kids game that makes you swear like an OAP? No, thanks. **Kath Brice**

PSM3 Verdict

***Arthur and the Invisibles* contains...**
Mini-people | Puzzles that'll test your patience | Constant character-juggling

Overall Pretty enough, but the whole thing feels needlessly difficult instead of any fun. Don't bother.

48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REVIEWED CRACKDOWN SUPREME COMMANDER GHOST RIDER WARIO: MASTER OF DISGUISE HOTEL DUSK ROCKY BALBOA
EDGE 173 ON SALE NOW

Pub Sega | **Dev** AM2
Price £50 | **Release** Out now (import)
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
Virtua Fighter 5 is on the disc this month!
Coming Soon

Showing character New character Eileen is the first character on the select screen - she's a good beginner's choice, but lacks the range of Akira.

PSM3 BUY IT

IMPORT

Virtua Fighter 5

Absolutely perfect in every way - so why can't we love it?

KNOW IT NOW

- Lots and lots of destructible scenery? ☑
- Absolute proof of PS3's power? ☑
- One of the greatest beat-'em-ups ever? ☑
- Gameplay to appeal to all-comers? ☒

When Sega released *Virtua Fighter* in 1993 – the world's first 3D beat-em-up – it changed gaming forever. *VF1* was embryonic, but a vital step towards *VF5* – *perhaps* the ultimate 3D fighting game. But before we start the fanfare, there are things you should know.

If you didn't like *VF4* – and this plays identically – you won't like this. Secondly, although it oozes quality from every pixel, most people we've played have said "looks nice", messed about for five minutes and left without coming back. This is a problem for the game – and us – to say the least.

So what's going on? How can AM2's masterwork be leaving people so cold? One problem is that *Virtua Fighter 2* was doing almost everything this game does (albeit with incredibly basic looks by comparison), ten years ago. The game hasn't moved on that much since – especially since *VF3*'s innovations such as the 'evade' button and uneven stages have been dropped again.

All substance, no style?

The second problem is games like *Dead Or Alive*, which have brought unprecedented glamour to the genre. Some gamers will be switched off by the way *VF5* looks because, although it's truly magnificent, it's just not that *spectacular*. Flowing clothes, rippling muscles – the game has reached a plateau of visual excellence that makes it look like fan art in motion without ever appearing *explosive*. But is that enough for you?

For us, yes. It's beautiful. Arcs of white powder fly up from roundhouse kicks in the snow, gorgeous puddles of water reflect the lamps in the rainy street, shadows fall over not only the floor and over the characters' bodies too, but *over each other*. And the fabrics would give a tailor raptures... we could go on, but just look at the screens. It's all pure Sega magic. And it's brilliantly 'videogamey' – the character models are the finest we've ever seen, because they still *look like games characters*, not some zombified monstrosities. *VF5* drips with quality and, in that respect, PS3 has proved its worth.

Virtua Fighter 5

"Technically flawless, but just not quite essential"

Who's that girl? You can buy new hairstyles, clothes and make-up for your characters until they're almost totally unrecognisable.

Gameplay-wise, we can't find fault with it either. Everything flows so well – even the longer throw moves no longer stand out from the standard, traditionally staccato blow-by-blow fighting. The animation has been polished to such a degree that even awkward moments – like when stomps have to connect with a rising opponent – look believable. Only one move looks fake – one of Lau's, where his blow to the chest has no impact whatsoever – but in a list of thousands, that's forgiveable.

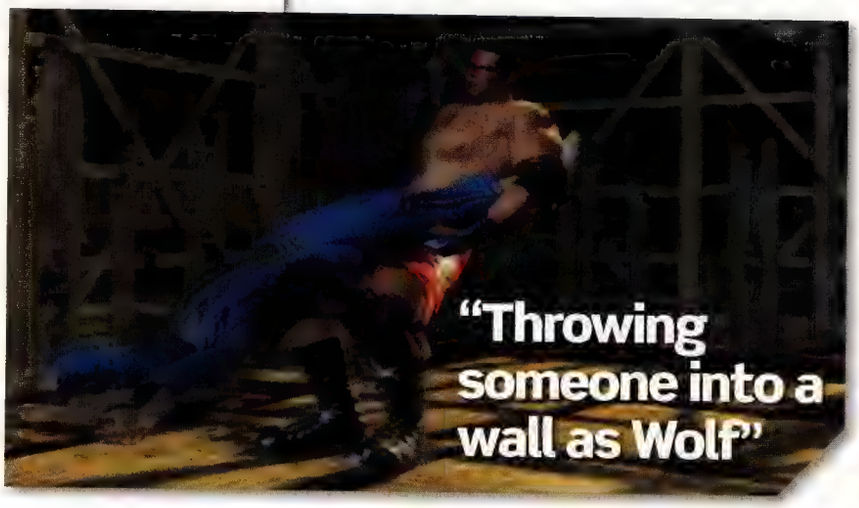
Loads of loading

What's not so cool are the loading times, which, if you use the hard drive, are a few seconds too long – and the length of an ice age if you don't. But it's bearable, and you'll soon be scrapping your way through single-player mode, kicking ass and unlocking items and clothing for your characters.

So to the score. *VF5* is technically flawless, the result of over a decade's evolution. In the minds of some, it's worth a mark well into the nineties. But it's just not *essential*. It's *Virtua Fighter*. It hasn't really changed over the years and, if you're not massively into beat-'em-ups, you won't get as much out of it as those who are. It depends how you approach it. Looking for a beat-'em-up? This is a terrific one and if you utterly *love* the genre, add another five or six per cent to the score below. Just after a fun PS3 game? This is undoubtedly one of them, but it's not quite up there with, say, *MotorStorm* or *Resistance*. Fight fans, then, should prioritise this at PS3's launch. Everyone else should put it third or fourth on their shopping list. **Justin Towell**

Not long for this Earth?
Pai's father Lau is looking pretty ill these days and retches before each match. But he's still got it where it counts – he's hard as nails.

Fave Feature



PSM3 Verdict

***Virtua Fighter 5* contains...**
Sublime graphics | Flawless fighting
Amazing clothing | Mid-bout boozing

Overall Best scrapper ever? Perhaps, but *VF5* is *such* an acquired taste. Great, but not one for all.

87

PS3

Pub Sega | **Dev** Sega
Price $59 | **Release** Out now (US)
Multi-player 1-4

ON THE DISC
Look for the review on next month's DVD disc

Maria, full of grace The animation is fluid and lifelike, but the incredibly detailed player likenesses are only really visible up close.

PSM3 BUY IT

Virtua Tennis 3

A tennis game that's for life, not just for Wimbledon

KNOW IT NOW

Loads of real tennis pros to choose from? ☑
Super-intuitive, realistic tennis fun? ☑
Absurd fruit-dodging mini-games? ☑
Hard-hitting online multi-player action? ☒

This will make you *love* tennis. No, really. Even if you loathe the sport and grit your teeth when Wimbledon distorts the TV schedules, *Virtua Tennis 3* is so realistic that it *forces* you to appreciate the sport's intricacies – in a stealthy education dressed as addiction. And while the latest game in the much-loved series is no massive departure – it's still a tennis game, for instance – there's enough new gameplay tweaks and content to tempt veterans as well as newcomers.

It looks an absolute gem, with stunning dynamic lighting and some of the most impressive player models yet seen on PS3. There's over 20 real competitors, including Federer, Nadal and Roddick, plus the likes of Sharapova, Hingis and Hantuchova for those who prefer their tennis lady-shaped. Up close in replays, these pros look almost photo-realistic – expertly capturing everything from Henman's snaggled-toothed grimace to the coquettish wiggle of Sharapova in her prude-baiting mini.

Smokin' aces

But to accurately simulate a quick-fire sport like tennis, the animation *has* to be ultra-responsive and *VT3* delivers. Everything from a topspin lob to a desperate baseline lunge looks spot-on and even if you change your mind mid-stroke – switching from a backhand down the line to a cross-court volley, say – the animation is rapid enough to keep up with you, making for incredibly fluid gameplay.

The speed of the action is aided by the control system, a leftover from the original *Virtua Tennis* on Dreamcast. You don't mess with perfection, and the beautiful simplicity of ⊗ for topspin, ▢ to slice and △ to lob, holding the button down to get the desired power and directing the shot via the analogue stick still works an absolute treat. Brave souls can, if they wish, switch to Sixaxis control – and it's *decent* – it's fun for a while, but lacks the accuracy to use throughout the game. However, get a gang of you Sixaxising it up in multi-player and it's comedy gold, with the random jerks and thrusts resembling some kind of broken robot dance routine.

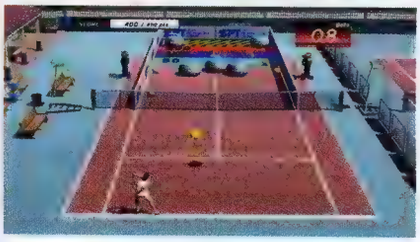
Out on court, the only real change is the improved opposition – just when you think

Virtua Tennis 3

"Get a gang Sixaxising it up and it's pure comedy gold"

Dive bomb Players will now fling themselves full-length in desperate pursuit of the ball.

On the rebound This minigame sees you trying to read the ball's direction as it boings off the bouncy spheres.



Curling one out Another World Tour challenge – this time it's a game of curling using tennis balls instead of brooms.

Swiss cheese Playing as Roger Federer is tantamount to cheating – the World No 1 is absurdly versatile in this game.

you've dispatched a winner, your rival will launch into a full-length lunge, somehow keeping the rally going. With points lasting that bit longer, more tactics come into play as you spray shots around to try and move your competitor out of position – which only adds to the satisfaction when you finally unleash a thunderous winner.

Another improvement is the increased focus on the way different surfaces play. Grass courts have an accurate low bounce, making serve and volley tactics a much better bet than strokes from the baseline. In contrast, the clay courts are bouncy like a castle, producing longer rallies.

Tour of duty

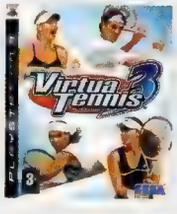
Options-wise, it's a game of two, erm, courts. The good news is that World Tour has been expanded into a gargantuan Career mode that sees you creating a player (determining everything from appearance to playing style) and improving his skills until he's ready to compete in the top tournaments. The way you increase stats is the big draw – besides match practice, there's a series of challenges focused on footwork, ground strokes, volleys and serves. These are brilliant fun and range from running about collecting fruit while dodging giant tennis balls to smacking balls at a moving scoreboard to try and get all your Bingo numbers.

The bad news, and our only major complaint, is the absence of online play. While Xbox360 gamers will be rallying away online, Sega has restricted PS3 gamers to offline multi-player. It's certainly a bummer, but it can't spoil the best multi-player game on PS3. Just try to ignore the cost of those extra Sixaxis pads... **Lee Hart**

Head Shot **The new create-a-player option is highly detailed. Check this realistic pic of Staff Writer Nathan... and try not to have nightmares.**

Fave Feature

PSM3 Verdict



***Virtua Tennis 3* contains...**

Licensed players | Fast and furious action
Ace minigames | No online play

Overall No giant leap for the series, but enough improvements to be a must-buy for *VT* fans.

85

Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Ubisoft
Price £30 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
Rocky. Review. Next month. You know the drill
PSP/Reviews

Blood brothers There's quite a lot of pixelly haemoglobin splashing about in *Rocky*. How do you like *that* fist quiche, Mason Dixon? Does it taste good? DOES IT?

Clubber duck You can block Clubber's facebusters by pushing ↑ on the analogue stick.

Rocky Balboa

If it were like the film, this would be a great comeback. *If* it were like the film

The *Rocky* games on PS2, while serviceable, have long since been battered into submission by *Fight Night*. But at least that series got to the machine first, thus enjoying some time as champion. *Rocky* PSP, on the other hand, finds *Fight Night* firmly in possession of the PSP title belt, and floats like a bee and stings like a butterfly in comparison.

Don't, by the way, assume this to be a direct port of the PS2 games – although, as we're talking about PSP here, we're amazed that it *isn't*. This is a new title, in which you can pit any Rocky characters from any of the movies – including the new one, obviously – against each other in the ring. So you might get the latest incarnation of the Italian Stallion fighting Spider Rico from the first movie, or Rocky 4-era Apollo Creed up against the original, youthful Balboa. It's like all your dreams come true. If all your dreams are about ancient boxing films.

Ivan-na break free Man, that's one *defined* six-pack. That's the secret to boxing success, obviously.

The bouts work OK, certainly, with left arm punches on ▢ and ✕ and right arm jabs mapped to △ and ○, while L2 performs bobs and weaves. But it's not very exciting, without the zip and adrenaline of *Fight Night*. It's a solid enough middleweight contender, though – until you get knocked to the floor and discover that getting to your feet in *Rocky* is harder than for a drunken amputee.

Technical knockout

To get up involves positioning a sliding pointer in the centre of a horizontal meter. As it moves, the horizon shifts with it, and it's up to you to get it level. Except such intricate movements are near-impossible for the rubbish analogue nubbin, and no sooner do you think you've got it than it slips off to the side, inevitably leading you to wrench it back the other way, overshoot the centre again and get counted out. Grr.

Rock stock **Wi-Fi offers the chance to go toe-to-toe with a mate. It works well, but we guarantee neither of you ever pick anyone but Rocky.**

And there's little depth. While there's a series of 'historical' matches re-enacting famous scenes, plus some challenges (along the lines of 'finish this match in one minute'), there's no Career mode, training or stat-tweakery – just a series of bouts which quickly begin to feel identical.

Rocky Balboa's a decent effort, no question – but this decent effort is no replacement for a knockout punch. Our advice? Stick to *Fight Night*. **David Cook**

PSM3 Verdict

***Rocky Balboa* contains...**
Ivan Drago | Apollo Creed | Clubber Lang
Leaden boxing | Six different Sly Stallones

Overall Not as good as *Fight Night* PSP, nor even the old PS2 *Rocky* games. So no title contender, but not bad either.

66

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Pub Eidos | **Dev** Deadline Games
Price £30 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-2 (Wi-Fi)

ON THE DISC
Chili Con Carnage will be on the disc next month

PSM3 BUY IT

Chili Con Carnage

Not half bad – as rocket riding, chicken fighting PSP games go...

KNOW IT NOW

- **Tequila, bullfighting and sombreros?** ☑
- **Catching hats on your head mid-gunfight?** ☑
- **Sending cars hurtling to their fiery doom?** ☑
- **Sensible physics and realistic combat?** ☒

Third-person action games rarely work on PSP. There aren't enough buttons to go around and, thanks to the absence of a second stick, controlling the camera is a nightmare. Even *Vice City Stories*, currently the best of the genre, suffers from a wonky camera and stilted controls. But, somehow, *Chili Con Carnage* works like a charm. All the controls are sensibly placed and the camera always seems to be able to keep up, even when you're flipping backwards over someone's head and pinching their sombrero.

Yes, as you've no doubt already guessed, *Chili Con Carnage* is a sort-of-sequel to PS2's *Total Overdose*, the Latin-flavoured action game where you went about nicking peoples' hats and performing preposterous acrobatic stunts. *Chili* recycles a lot of the levels and assets from its PS2 predecessor, but with new missions and a structure tailored more to handheld play. Instead of being a free-roaming *GTA* clone it's now a series of short missions. But that's no loss

Chilli Con Carnage

"Sensible controls and camera... *Chili* works like a charm"

Cool Move

This astounding image is from a scene where Ram 'ram raids' a hacienda full of baddies on the back of a torpedo. It's just one example of how preposterous the cut-scenes are, and how tongue-in-cheek the game is. Even more so than *GTA*.

Blast factor If you held ◻ here, Ram would target the explosive box in the background. Clever.

Moves

Do the Loco-motion

The best – and oddest – special moves...

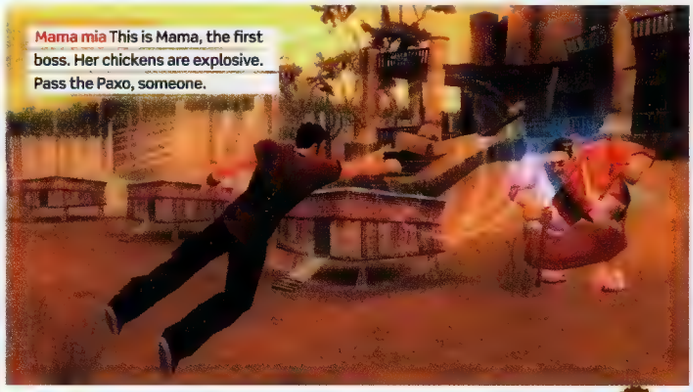
Guitar hero These two guitar cases conceal a pair of Gatling guns – effective among groups of enemies.

Gimp my ride Call upon the considerable talents of El Gimpo, an insane Lucha Libre wrestler.

Gold finger Fire this and the camera follows the bullet, until it smacks into your victim's ugly face.

Spin city This is like a smart bomb, wiping out every single enemy in the area. It's our favourite.

Back to back On your back, legs in the air, spraying wildly. There's a joke in their somewhere.



Mama mia This is Mama, the first boss. Her chickens are explosive. Pass the Paxo, someone.

because the best bits of *Total Overdose* were the shooty bits, not the sections where you had to drive all over the shop looking for things to do.

Big air

Jumping about killing people is the game's brainless highlight, which is mainly down to that control system we mentioned earlier. Press ⊗ and a direction and your man Ram will leap in slow-motion, or if you're next to a wall he'll run up it and perform a gravity-defying flip. You can fire from almost any position and you're marked for style, earning points for every flourish of acrobatic prowess, or for killing multiple enemies in one combo. And you get bonus points if you're wearing a hat while you do it which, while ridiculous, is enormously entertaining as well.

And although the free-roaming bits have been chucked out, there's still fun to be had with vehicles. Cars strewn around the level can be driven about, but their main purpose is making things explode. In the first mission you have to destroy three fertilizer towers. You could shoot them, but the most effective method of destruction is driving towards them, holding L1 to lean out of the door then diving away in slow-mo with a jab of ⊗. The car careers into the towers, exploding gloriously as you roll away unscathed. Or you could just just use the motors to run people over and reverse over their heads.

It's funny too. *Overdose* had its moments but *Chili* is full of genuine laughs, including an incredibly irreverent intro in which your father – and some kittens you'd just bought him for his birthday – are crushed beneath the spinning threshers of a combine harvester. OK, so laughing at tequila-slugging Mexican stereotypes might make you feel like a bit of a swine, but it's all in good fun. The soundtrack's also top-drawer, featuring classical mariachi music and contemporary Latino hip-hop by licensed artists, including the

Gunning for glory **You can only carry one gun normally, but a special pick-up lets you dual-wield for a few seconds. Charging about with two shotguns is a real thrill.**

Mad house What can we say... we've just run over a fat man in a chicken suit. Quite.

Babe magnet This gorgeous villa is full of not-so-gorgeous body-building girls with guns. Oh, dear.

Chili Con Carnage

"It's Die Hard meets Once Upon A Time In Mexico... huge amounts of fun"

Chopper suey Hanging off a helicopter and firing at tanks with a rocket launcher. *Rainbow Six* this ain't.

Red bull You have to trick this marauding cow into bashing its head through a glass wall. By shooting it to pieces.

brilliant Delinquent Habits. Get a combo going and the music kicks in, which gives you an incentive to keep them going.

Challenge everything

New to PSP is a series of challenges between missions that test your skills, from clearing a level of enemies to performing a list of certain moves within a time limit. They're a decent enough distraction, although they serve no practical purpose and you're given the option to skip them altogether, which you'll find yourself doing with alarming regularity. Other than that, though, *Chili* is *very* similar to *Total Overdose* and anyone expecting a brand new game will be disappointed.

The car's the star

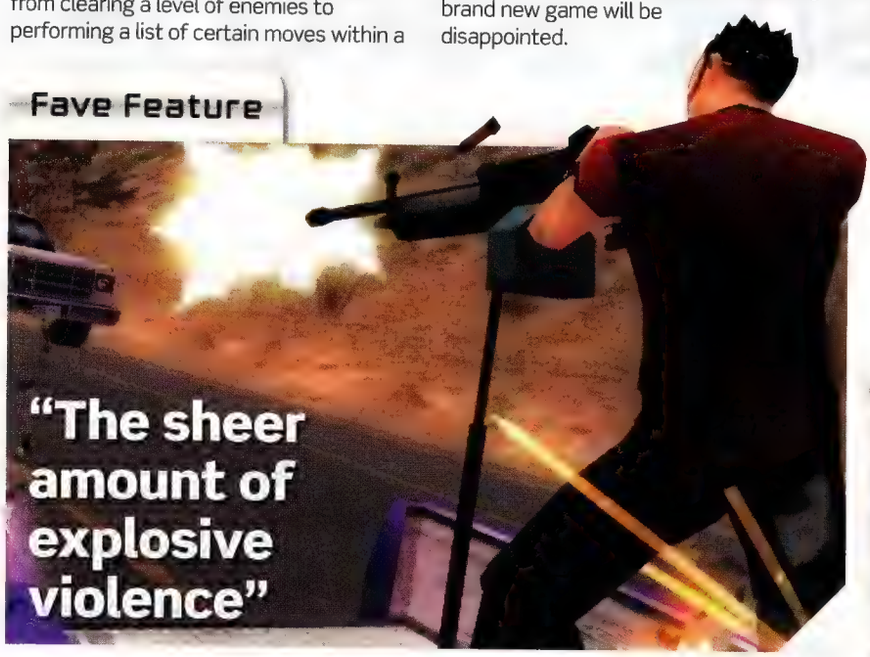
Vehicles range from rubbish old pick-ups to souped-up, flame-licked sports cars.

There *are* some new set-pieces. One of our favourites sees Ram clinging to a hook as it moves through a meat factory full of guards. Hanging with one arm, you kill the goons below with your rifle in the other and it's a real action hero moment. You'll also find yourself riding on the backs of moving rockets, hanging from helicopters and leaping out of moving cars. It's Die Hard meets Once Upon a Time in Mexico. But not even Depp or Willis had the cojones to whip a man's hat off his head.

Chili Con Carnage is one of the best action games on PSP. But that statement doesn't carry as much weight as it should because we're comparing it to games of the ilk of *50 Cent: Bulletproof G-Unit Edition, Splinter Cell Essentials, Medal of Honor Heroes* and so on. And if you're one of the few people out there who bought and finished *Total Overdose*, avoid it altogether. There really isn't enough new stuff in here to make it a worthwhile purchase. If not, though, *CCC* is throwaway, stupid, huge amounts of fun and you won't be able to resist its colourful charms. Just don't expect the novelty to last for more than a few hours.

Andy Kelly

Fave Feature



PSM3 Verdict

***Chili Con Carnage* contains...**

Ridiculous combat | Bright, sunny looks
Hilarious cut-scenes | Awesome Latino music

Overall It's not big and it's not clever, but the fun factor is undeniable. It's limited, but you *will* enjoy this to bits.

80

Pub Sony | **Dev** Studio Liverpool
Price £50 | **Release** Out now (Jap)
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
There's better PS3 racing in the form of GT5.

Back seat driver This is by far the best way to 'enjoy' the game. The on-car cameras show off wonderful reflections, super smooth paint and loooovely tyres. Mmm.

IMPORT

Formula One Championship Edition

Another F1 meeting where nothing exciting happens

KNOW IT NOW

Updated teams, drivers and tracks?	☑
Myriad set-up and strategy options?	☑
Lovely looks, on-board especially?	☑
Scintillating thrills and spills?	☒

Find F1 just too boring to watch? Don't worry – if this simulation is anything like authentic, then the people taking part aren't having any fun either. Perhaps that's why they all drive so fast – they're just desperate to get it over with. Whatever, this really very attractive game is hand-wringingly dull.

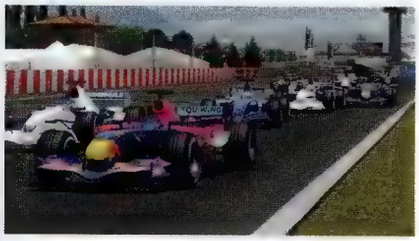
Here's why: the handling is terrible. In fact, it's so flawed there's simply never a time when it's fun, or even satisfying, to drive these cars. Despite being helpless fans of the real sport, even in its current state – we're being generous calling it a 'sport', for instance – playing *Formula One Championship Edition* quickly becomes a chore. And that's a shame.

It's particularly sad because the earlier editions in Studio Liverpool's long-running *F1* series were fantastic, soundly destroying EA's good-looking but poor-handling efforts. Maybe it's karma, maybe feng shui, but for some reason we've come full circle. EA's mistake is now Sony's. Quite why is beyond us. And no, we don't subscribe to the idea that they're hard to drive *because* they're F1 cars. There are certain basic principles of physics no matter how much money you spend. Tyres slip if you put a lot of force through them, for instance, and steering should react in a linear, predictable way. *Formula One* gets both these things wrong. Perhaps in a misguided attempt to replicated the hated traction control, the rear tyres are now glued to the road at all times. You actually have to put one in the dirt to induce a spin. What this basically means is that fantastic mountain of horsepower behind you is as tricky to deal with as the sighs of a dying asthmatic. There's simply no sense that these cars are unleashing 80 horsepower, let alone 800.

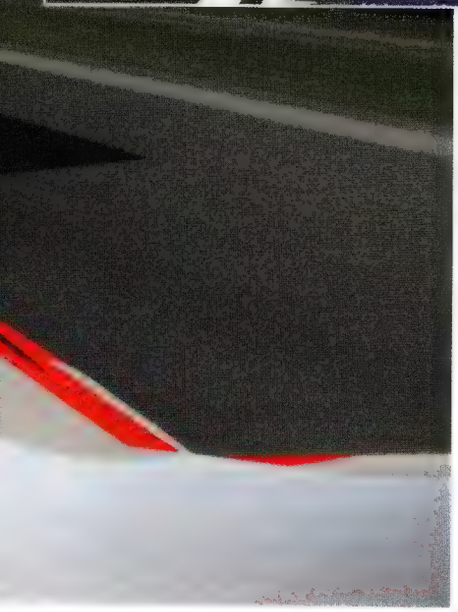
Sub-traction

Not only is this deeply unexciting, it's not even realistic. In real life F1 cars still slide, and their drivers can still use their throttles to steer, but you can't do any of that here. You just press and go. What's more, very smooth drivers like Jenson Button avoid

Lap it up You could almost mistake this for TV, except there's overtaking.



Button up Now he's won a Grand Prix at last, Jenson's a proper hero. Let's hope his new car is better than this one.



triggering the traction control and go faster for it – it would have been great to try the same thing. But you can't even hear it working. It's fake. You just press and go.

But even while the back end can be left totally to its own (electronic) devices, the front is all over the place. It's never predictable, and because the back won't slide however much you provoke it, there's little you can do but wait as it ploughs across the track, then panic as it suddenly lunges into the corner. What should have been a smooth arc becomes like the edge of a 50p piece.

Steer pressure

Naturally the fastest turns require the greatest precision, and here the game should deliver its greatest thrills... but no. That sluggish, unresponsive steering makes it hard to take even approximately the line you want. Subsequent corrections are a big soggy mess too, and the whole thing turns into a kind of giant burning pair of trousers pinwheeling through the universe in a silent Y of pain. Actually, it's like the on-screen driver's taking foreign-language dictation rather than reading your mind. Yes, that's more apt.

We should mention the Career mode, where you work to impress better teams, or the regular Championship mode or the ability to scale right up to a full GP. Yes we should, just as we mentioned them when they appeared in *Formula One 05*. But if your dinner's so undercooked it's bleeding, it doesn't really matter how ornate the plate is, does it?

Steve Williams

Skin deep It's gorgeous, but dull as Paris Hilton bathing in torpid ditchwater. Tsk.

Look, don't touch

Can't be bothered to touch the pad? Wakeful? Spectator mode recreates a whole GP without you.

Fave Feature

PSM3 Verdict

***Formula One Champ Edition* contains...**

Next-gen shininess | Lovely replays
Tedious handling | Fatal levels of boredom

Overall The graphics of tomorrow, the content of last year and all the fun of the Dark Ages.

48

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony
Price $50 | **Release** Out now (US)
Multi-player 1–2 (1–4 online)

ON THE DISC
Slide your disc into your DVD player right now

Shocking graphics Casting spells and taking out screenloads of enemies looks good. Sadly, the meat of the game just isn't all that exciting.

IMPORT

Untold Legends Dark Kingdom

There's a reason this legend remains untold

So... this is the future, is it? The sizzling 1080p, HDR lit, epic that's going to justify the best part of a grand you've just spent on a hi-def television? Well if *Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom* is anything to go buy the future is as dull as washing dishes with the lights off. This sequel – spawned from the lukewarm PSP RPG series – isn't the most terrible thing we've played on PS3 (that's *Gundam*) but it's not exactly defining the shape of original gaming.

A bone to pick The hordes of skeleton enemies can be blown apart with a few choice sword slashes and spells.

The story of *Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom* is fairly uninspiring, involving a crazy king and his loyal servants uprising to thwart his dastardly plans. Enter the heroes – Malakesh the wizard, Golan the toughman and Zala, the obligatory lady. Why do these people never have sensible names? Paul, say. Paul the wizard. What's wrong with that? Anyway, the visuals are much better than the shoddy screens that were doing the rounds early last year – each character looks big and bolshy as they whack their way through the hordes of enemies. Even the combat feel solid and competent, if not a little repetitive. But sadly, this is where the fun fades into the shadows in *Dark Kingdom*.

Untold problems

Untold Legends' first foray into the PS3 wilderness is packed with glitches and continuity errors, which become an absolute embarrassment. For example, say you finish off your last opponent a digital mile away from the next area to visit – you'll be magically transported there in an instant during the cut-scene. Then there's the boss battle where you and your tutor Torran kick the colour out of a giant enemy, only to be shown being whooped by the beast in the next breath. It's patchier than a hand-sewn quilt.

Let it all shout
The in-game tutor is hilarious. He hollers things like "YOU CAN JUMP THAT!" like a West End thespian.

Still, this a decent PS3 debut quest, but this by-the-book RPG is nowhere near what we expect from Sony's new machine. You'd be better off waiting for *White Knight Story*... next year. Ugh. **Nathan Irvine**

PSM3 Verdict

***Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom* contains...**
Wolves | Tree-dwelling baddies | Mana Levelling up | OK fighting

Overall Decent, but leaves you wondering why you were excited about PS3 in the first place.

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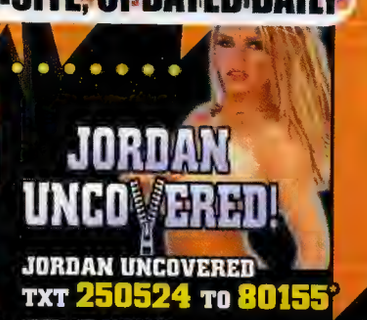

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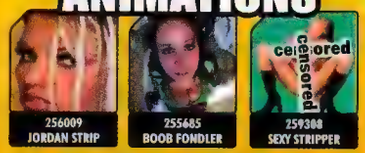

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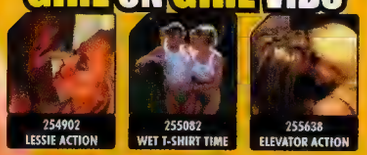

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Capcom | PS2 | Out now

Capcom Classics Collection Vol 2

A retro collection that's actually good

We admit it – we were ready to slate this as another collection of crap old games better off left to rot in the vaults of gaming hell. After all, most retro bundles are exactly that. And our initial impressions were pretty bad. The original *Street Fighter* is here – no, not SF2, before you complain – and it stinks. *Last Duel*? Pap. But then... what's this? *Eco Fighters* is actually a fun little blaster. And *Mega Twins*? Solid and colourful platform fun. Then onto *Midnight Wanderers*... hang on, this is awesome – a 2D platform-shooter, combining *Gunstar Heroes*' gameplay with fantasy-style graphics of *Metal Slug* quality – we love it.

Blasts from the past

And they keep coming. *Knights Of The Round* is like *Golden Axe*, but better and *Captain Commando* is like *Streets Of Rage*, but chunkier and badder. This isn't a disc full of ancient-looking games – these are impressive 2D gems with massive sprites and gorgeous colour palettes. Yup, they still look as great now as they always did. Add in well-known hits like *Strider* and *1942* and the package suddenly looks like great value. And, as the jewel in this retro crown, there's *Super Street Fighter 2 Turbo*, now with a bonus video tutorial showcasing the depths of its combat system. Great stuff, even if you probably own *SF2* about a million times over by now.

Whether this is as consistently great as *Sega Megadrive Collection* depends on your preferences – but you might find some new all-time favourites among these forgotten gems. Worth investigating. **Justin Towell**

PSM3 Verdict

Retro goodness – with only a few stinkers. Bliss.

81

How do, Ken? *SF2 Turbo* is the biggest name on here, but don't overlook the minor titles.

Capcom | PSP | Feb 16

Capcom Puzzle World

From a great retro package to...

Capcom should have released *Super Puzzle Fighter* as a standalone title because that's all you're going to play here. Seeing the *Street Fighter* crew manga-fied and shrunk down, then forced to fight by stringing *Columns*-style gems together is both charming and addictive. The other games are *Block Block* – a sort of *Breakout* clone that's mildly entertaining (but nothing more), plus three identical iterations of *Bust-a-Move*, where you burst balloons with a harpoon device. Very basic stuff and seeing it duplicated to fill space leaves you feeling short-changed. So forget they're there at all and enjoy *Super Puzzle Fighter* – it's ace. Just a shame the rest of *CPW* is such balls. **Justin Towell**

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Deep Silver | PSP | Out now

The Hustle: Detroit Streets

You'd think it'd be hard to mess up pool, but...

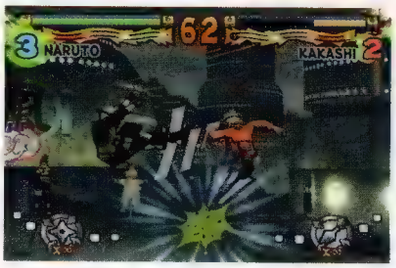
It was a nice idea – making a pool game with a story and setting it in seedy bars full of fist fighting bikers and fast women... but it's not done very well. The game is slow-moving and badly lacks atmosphere. OK, the pool itself is solid and the graphics are half-decent, with 3D and 2D characters all moving in the background while you take your shot... it's just that it's all so clichéd. And when the same heckles ("Are you sure you're using the right end of the stick?") happen for the umpteenth time, you'll wish you'd bought *World Championship Snooker* instead. Don't bother. **Justin Towell**

43

Atari | PS2 | Out now

Naruto: Ultimate Ninja

The 'ultimate ninja'? Ooh, we're quaking...



Lovingly crafted and true to its Manga source material, this is a chaotic and cheerful scrapper with an honest sense of humour. The fighting mechanic itself isn't going to win any prizes – the special moves soon start to repeat and the arenas are trick 3D, like Nintendo's *Super Smash Bros*. Graphically, though, it's highly accomplished with a gorgeous shading technique, Japanese symbols overlaid on top of the action and mid-fight venue changes. If only the fighting itself were deeper, we could be looking at a real classic. But as it is, this is pure, brilliant fan service – and if you've never sampled the delights of Naruto, this game might even get you into it. A must for fans. **Justin Towell**

77

Konami | PS2 | Feb

Dancing Stage Supernova

Will we get *Black Hole Edition* next?

Another Dancing Stage game. What is there to say? The dancing mechanic is rock-solid, the difficulty tiers are well-judged and the two-player mode is perfect for teenage parties. The tracklist isn't that brilliant, mind you, with only Basement Jaxx and Fat Boy Slim standing out. The presentation is as great as ever, with cool wireframe options screens and music videos playing behind the beats, as if you've got time to look. And there's a new Stellar Master mode where you complete challenges, although this can get stupidly difficult. Hardly essential, but an excellent first dancing game. **Justin Towell**

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PSM3 Recommends

The best games from the last few months

Lego Star Wars 2
Eidos | PS2
"Almost endless replayability, improved co-op and, most importantly, good old-fashioned fun. *Lego Star Wars 2* is cute, funny and hardcore."
PSM3 Rating 91%

Okami
Capcom | PS2
"Quite brilliant, with substance enough to live up to its stunning visuals. Peaceful, elegant and you'll play it for hours... the most beautiful game on PS2."
PSM3 Rating 95%

Kingdom Hearts 2
Square Enix | PS2
"It's like *Final Fantasy*, but with real-time combat and full of Disney characters. One of the strongest, most accomplished games on PS2. Excels on every level."
PSM3 Rating 94%

Sega | PS3 | Out now (import)

World Snooker Championship 2007

Now on PS3, with inexplicably poor graphics

The PlayStation 2 version is a decent snooker title and this is... more or less exactly the same. You can't fault the game mechanics, it's very playable and we found ourselves repeatedly enjoying the sweet taste of victory. Excellent fun, then, but *World Championship Snooker* looks absolutely *shocking*. Audience members' heads disappear when they stand to applaud, cues sometimes hover a good foot away from clenched hands and, now that the players are in high definition, they look like our worst nightmares made digital. We know that PlayStation 3 *can* render the hairs on the backs of hands perfectly, but does it actually *have* to? And if so, it must be possible to do it better than this. John Virgo and Steve Davis are now commentating on a freak-filled puppet show. You'll thoroughly enjoy the main action, but you'll skip through the TV cutaways. And when you've paid so much for a machine capable of amazing graphical feats, you really shouldn't be doing that. **Justin Towell**

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EA | PS2 | Out now

NFL Street 3

More US football touches down on PSP

Although it's hard to believe at times, games are meant to just be about fun. EA's *Street* series have never pretended to be more than a quick blast of entertainment and this proves that point perfectly. Presentation-wise it's very slick, the player models are chunky and the backgrounds a marked improvement over last year's effort. The cut-scenes between plays are entertaining and the special moves suitably OTT.

The game is still a brutal, rough-and-tumble version of NFL, with enough hard tackles to leave you wincing. But although the rules are cut down, the detail isn't, with the player rosters as up-to-date as they could be.

The gameplay is arcade-style, with several interceptions per game, catches off walls and chances to beat the whole field with one run. But once you're over the cosmetic gloss, you might wander back to *Madden* for your grid-iron fix, especially if you own one of the older *NFL Streets*. Worth a look, however. **Justin Towell**

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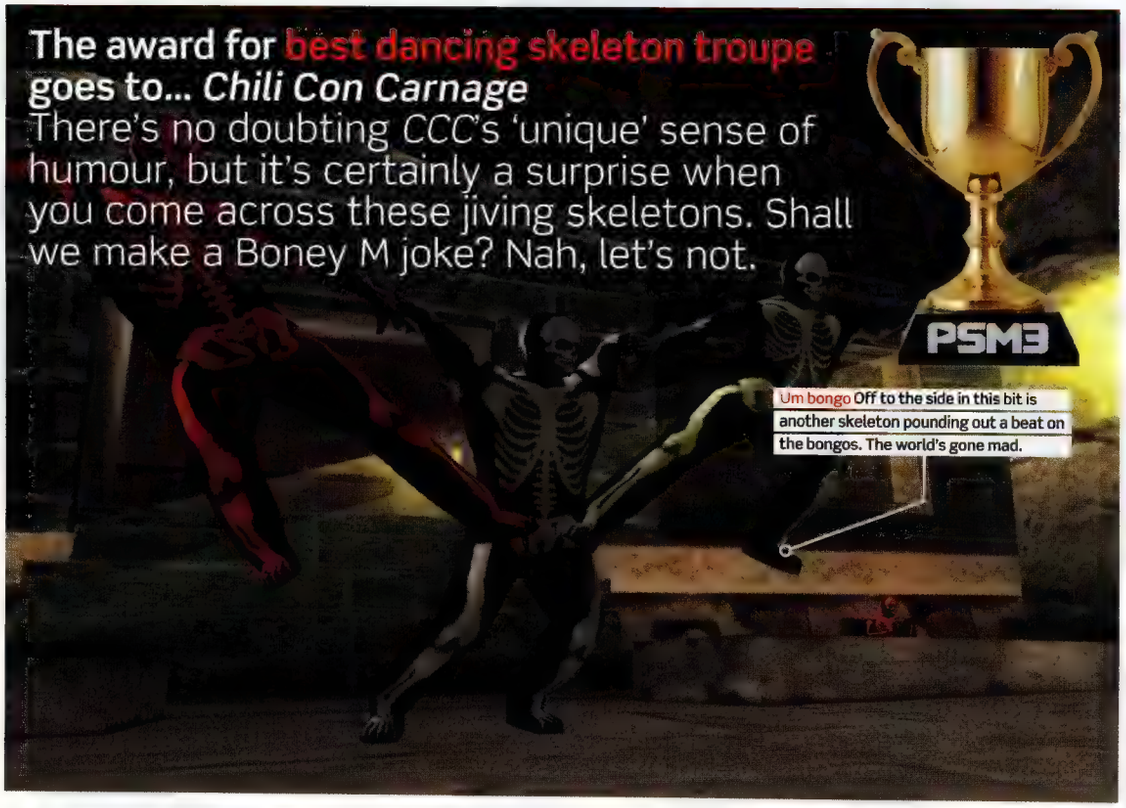
PSM3 Awards

The highlights (and lowlights) of this month's reviews

The award for best dancing skeleton troupe goes to... *Chili Con Carnage*

There's no doubting *CCC*'s 'unique' sense of humour, but it's certainly a surprise when you come across these jiving skeletons. Shall we make a Boney M joke? Nah, let's not.



The Dalek rip-off award goes to...

Virtua Tennis 3

Enter the Alien Attack minigame and you'll be smacking your ball against evil aliens out to take over Wimbledon and the French Open. But hang on a minute – these interplanetary visitors look suspiciously familiar...

The one tie-in too far award goes to...

Arthur And The Invisibles

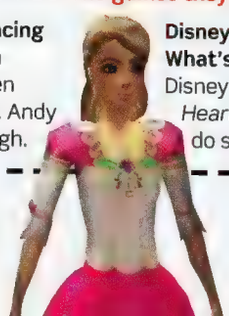
We'd rather there were no more films for kids *ever again* than play *another* crummy spin-off like this one. Yes, we'd prefer to make all the world's five-year-olds cry. This is the level of humanity you've reduced us to, game-makers.

Hi-Score Table

☐ Virtua Fighter 5	p64	87%
☐ Test Drive Unlimited	p56	85%
☐ Virtua Tennis 3	p66	85%
☐ Capcom Classics Vol 2	p78	81%
☐ Chili Con Carnage	p70	80%
☐ NFL Street 3	p79	78%
☐ Naruto: Ultimate Ninja	p78	77%
☐ World Snooker 2007 PS3	p79	74%
☐ Rocky Balboa	p68	66%
☐ Dancing Stage Supernova	p78	65%
☐ Untold Legends	p76	59%
☐ Ghost Rider	p60	58%
☐ Arthur And The Invisibles	p62	48%
☐ F1 Championship Edition	p74	48%
☐ The Hustle	p78	43%
☐ Capcom Puzzle World	p78	38%

Buyer Beware! The games they're afraid to send us

Barbie in The 12 Dancing Princesses Activision
We're glad we've been spared this, actually. Andy seems excited, though.



Disney's Kim Possible: What's The Switch? Buena Vista
Disney had success with *Kingdom Hearts 2*, but will this kids' game do so as well? Here's a clue: no.

Beverly Hills Cop Blast
From the people who brought you *Babe: The Game* (seriously) comes this car game, which will doubtless piss all over Eddie Murphy's legacy.

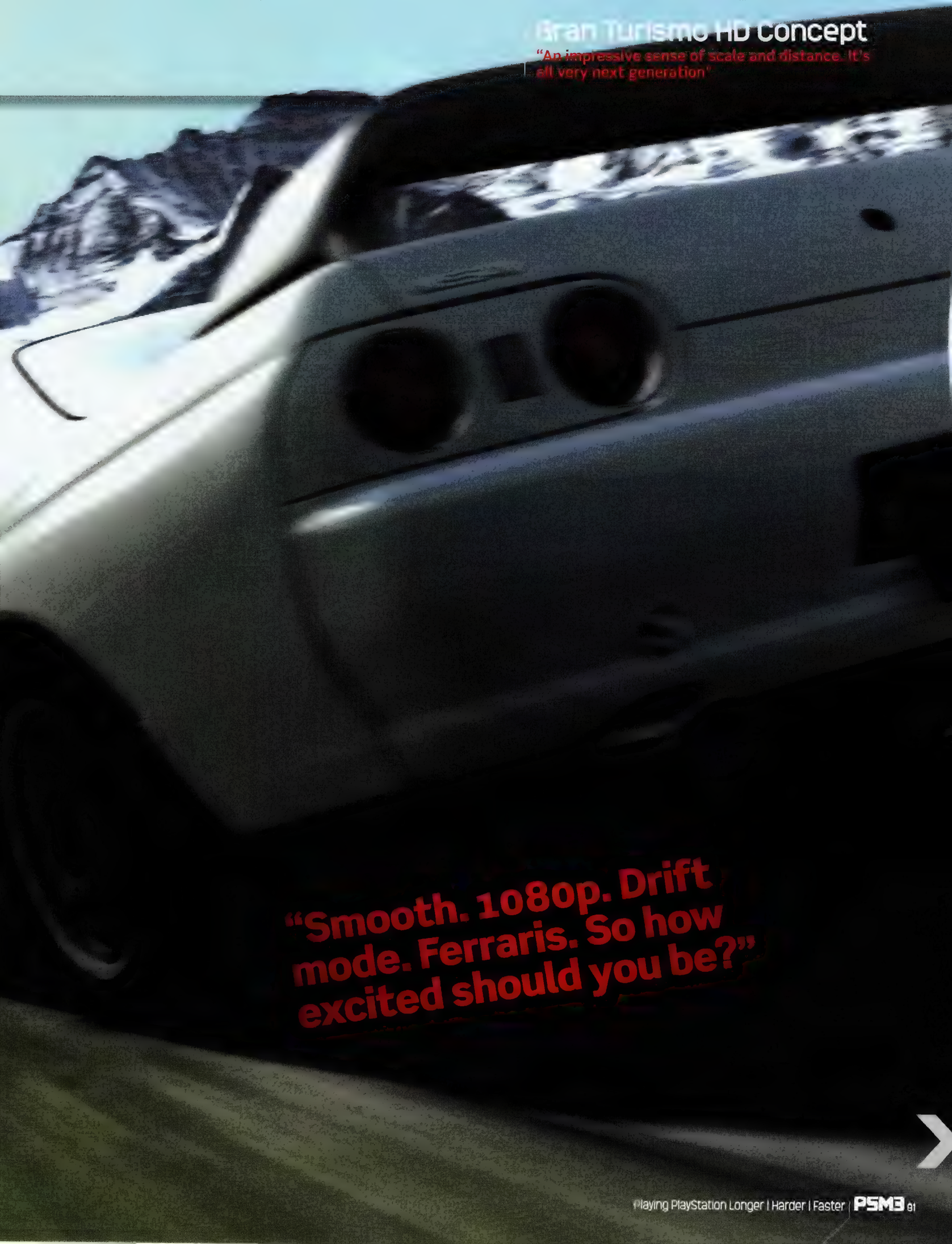
GTHD IS DEAD! LONG LIVE GTHD CONCEPT!

Sony's plans for GT HD on PS3 stalled – so what is GT HD Concept? And what does it mean for GT5?

Say hello to the silver lining, because the day PS3 hits the UK you can be playing *Gran Turismo*. Sony's grand plans for a two-part GTHD, featuring downloadable, hi-def GT4 content on the one hand and an authentwic GT5 taster on the other, have bitten the dust. What started as *Vision GT* – a quick 'n' dirty demo designed to show off the future – has, via *GT HD*, become *GT HD Concept*. Available only as a free 630Mb download from the PlayStation Store, it's a small, but free, look at how *GT* looks in glorious high 1080p definition-o-vision. And it's free. So you can't really complain. Or can you?

It's a very small demo – *GT HD Concept* has one track and ten cars, though completing it (possible in a minimum of ten laps) does open a 'tuned' set of the same cars, among other things. It certainly won't take until 2008 to play, which is when we expect *GT5*.

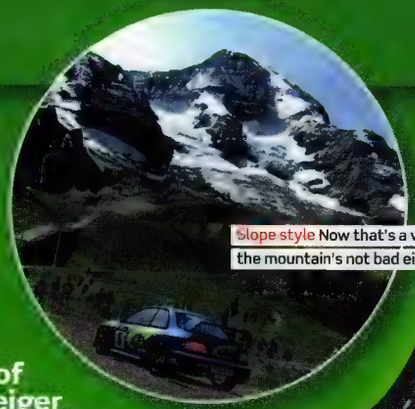
But that's not the point. Some differences are subtle – the even-more sensual handling, the livelier environments – but others hit you in the face. There's the gorgeously smooth HD looks, which run up to the 1080p maximum. Plus the brand new Drift mode. And the Ferrari. So how excited should you be? Read on for much more...


Gran Turismo HD Concept
"An impressive sense of scale and distance. It's all very next generation"
"Smooth. 1080p. Drift mode. Ferraris. So how excited should you be?"

Course guide

Taking on *HD Concept*'s track

Eiger Nordwand might be a relatively short track, but it mixes fast turns, steep inclines, awkward switchbacks and tricky corner complexes for a real, all-round test of a car.



Slope style Now that's a view. And the mountain's not bad either. Ha.

Eye of the eiger

It's not the first time we've seen a mountain background – there was El Capitan in GT4 – but this view of the Eiger is simply stunning, with real-looking shadows and an impressive sense of scale and distance. Very next-gen.

Nifty drifter 4WD rally cars are perfect for Drift Mode. Put hard tyres on and go mad.

Rally round

You'll now see rally-style boards around GT's circuits, denoting the start and finish of timed sections. Drift Mode requires you to clear these multi-corner sections sideways without going off the track...

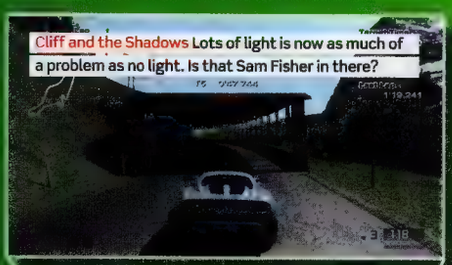
Bumpy bumpy

GT's finest tracks have always been the bumpy, hilly, awkward ones, and Eiger Nordwand is perhaps the steepest and lumpiest yet. There's even a jump on the fastest straight.

2 The fast bit

The hills are alive

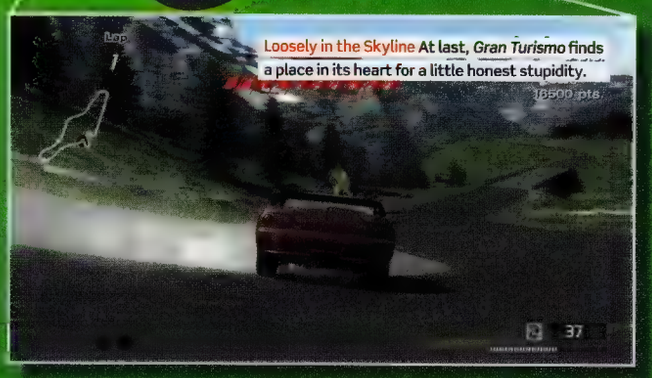
Not only are the crowds more dense, the people are fully 3D and animated – some sitting, some cheering, some waving flags, some taking snaps. It certainly feels a lot more organic.



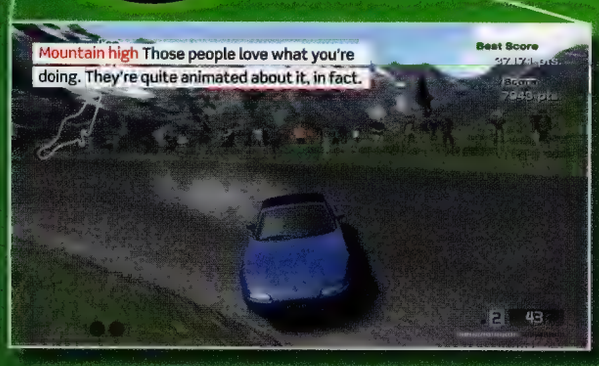
Cliff and the Shadows Lots of light is now as much of a problem as no light. Is that Sam Fisher in there?

The twisty bit 1

3 The blinding bit

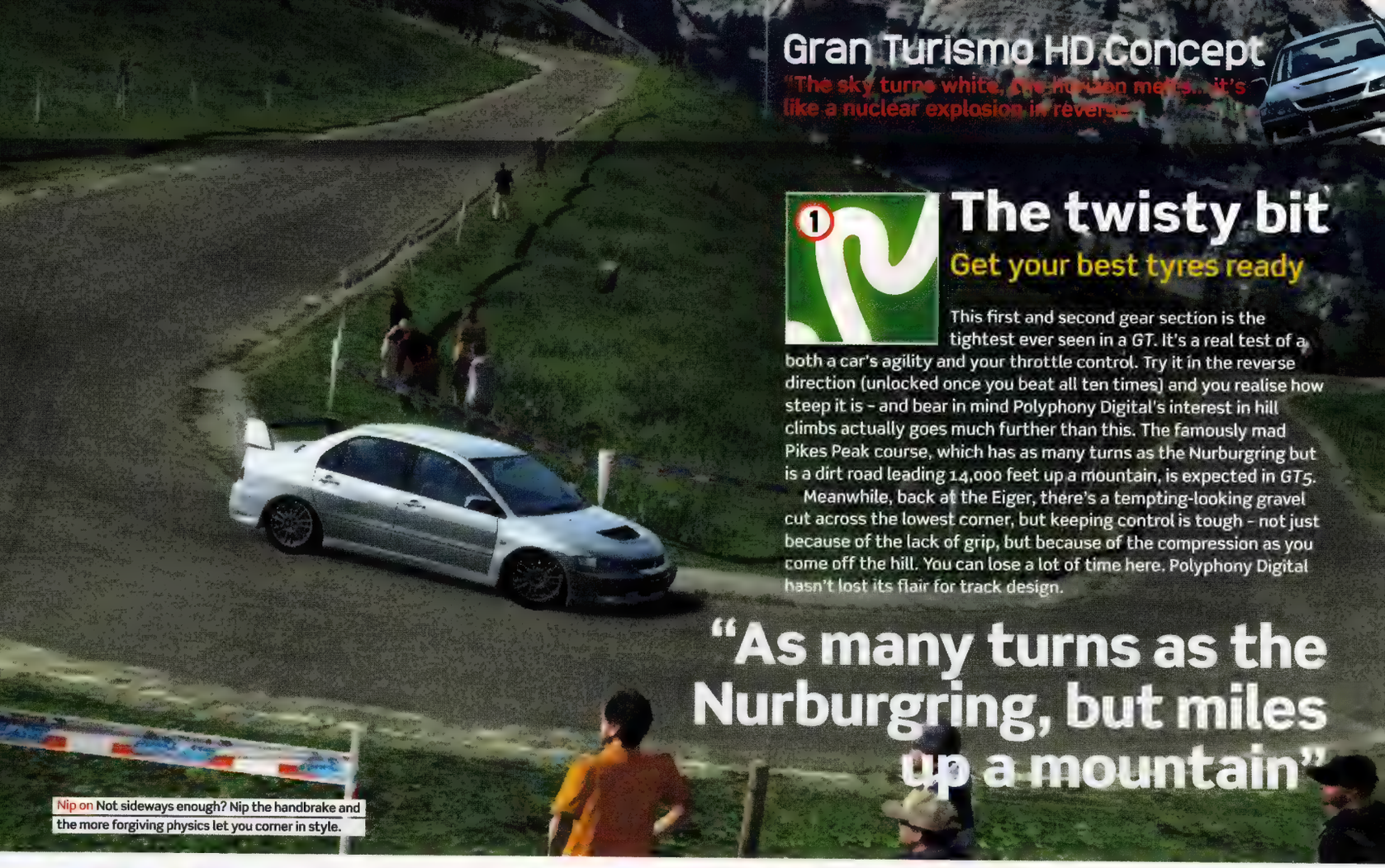


Loosely in the Skyline At last, *Gran Turismo* finds a place in its heart for a little honest stupidity.



Mountain high Those people love what you're doing. They're quite animated about it, in fact.

"The crowds are fully-animated 3D. It feels a lot more organic"



1 The twisty bit

Get your best tyres ready

This first and second gear section is the tightest ever seen in a *GT*. It's a real test of a both a car's agility and your throttle control. Try it in the reverse direction (unlocked once you beat all ten times) and you realise how steep it is – and bear in mind Polyphony Digital's interest in hill climbs actually goes much further than this. The famously mad Pikes Peak course, which has as many turns as the Nurburgring but is a dirt road leading 14,000 feet up a mountain, is expected in *GT5*.

Meanwhile, back at the Eiger, there's a tempting-looking gravel cut across the lowest corner, but keeping control is tough – not just because of the lack of grip, but because of the compression as you come off the hill. You can lose a lot of time here. Polyphony Digital hasn't lost its flair for track design.

"As many turns as the Nurburgring, but miles up a mountain"

Nip on Not sideways enough? Nip the handbrake and the more forgiving physics let you corner in style.

2 The fast bit

Brakes? Who needs *braaaakes*?!

Even the fast straight is tricky – you come out of a demanding, blind entry, late apex double turn onto it, and there's a huge jump in the middle. The fastest cars give little time between landing and heavy braking, so while that Ferrari might be powerful, it's heavy and only has rear drive. The track's trickiness means beating the nimbler, lighter, 4WD Lancer or Celica down here isn't easy.

While the physics are undoubtedly enhanced – every slide just feels softer, fuller and more detailed than before – at this point it's only a matter of degree. The jump shows the unconvincing flights and landings (and collisions, if you can't stop) remain, but it always seemed PlayStation 2's power was routed nearly totally into ground-based behaviour. Surely PlayStation 3 has the grunt to spare for leaps and crashes now, and surely Polyphony have the time to make them work? Time will tell.

Lap it up In truth, the time limits aren't too tough. Online ranking will provide a longer-lasting challenge.

3 The blinding bit

Next-gen HDR lighting explained

OK, you've seen tunnels in *Gran Turismo* before, but not like this. Driving in you're plunged into darkness, and just as your 'eyes' are adjusting, you fly out the other end – into a near-painfully blinding light. It's known as High Dynamic Range lighting (HDR), and it's the new lens flare. But where lens flare mimicked the bright interlocked circles of direct sunlight in a camera, HDR mimics the effect of light on the human eye.

Basically, your 'eye' gradually adjusts to the gloom of the tunnel, then is overwhelmed with light at the exit. The sky turns white, details wash out, the horizon melts... it's like a nuclear explosion in reverse. Next-gen visuals are about more evocative things than just extra detail.

Argh, my next-gen eyes! Just for a second, the sky explodes and you're blinded with science.

What Ferraris feature in GT HD Concept?

At last, the finest manufacturer has entered the finest game. Only two specific Ferrari models are confirmed so far – the F430 and the 599 GTB Fiorano – and only the latter is in *Concept*. It's impossible to complain, however. Despite being extremely powerful with over 600bhp, it's heavy, making it a handful around Eiger Nordwand's twistier sections. It's clearly going to rule on faster, more open tracks – especially in Drift mode, where it's Enzo-derived engine and rear-wheel drive make it perfect for 100mph slides.

Big is beautiful Few games – if any – are accurate enough that a car this powerful has any downsides. Its weight makes it a beast. Good drivers only...

And what cars would we like in the full game?

Perennials such as the Enzo, 355 and Daytona are practically guaranteed. Pray for these special babies...

F40

Year: 1987 | Power: 470bhp | Weight: 1254kg | Fact: It's so light, it doesn't even have door handles!

288 GTO

Year: 1984 | Power: 400bhp | Weight: 1050kg | Fact: The F40 was developed from this motor

250 GT

Year: 1962 | Power: 302bhp | Weight: 1043kg | Fact: The 'GT' stands for *Gran Turismo*

Which is the best car in GT HD Concept?

*Ranked in order of fastest lap time on Eiger Nordwand, from left to right

TOYOTA CELICA GT-FOUR

Year: 1995 | Power: 294hp | Weight: 1200kg | Drift or race it? Both

FERRARI 599 GTB FIORANO

Year: 2006 | Power: 611hp | Weight: 1580kg | Drift or race it? Drift

MITSUBISHI LANCER EVO IX GSR

Year: 2005 | Power: 276hp | Weight: 1410kg | Drift or race it? Drift

LOTUS ELISE 111R

Year: 2005 | Power: 189hp | Weight: 850kg | Drift or race it? Race

MITSUBISHI LANCER EVO IV GSR

Year: 1996 | Power: 276hp | Weight: 1350kg | Drift or race it? Both

NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R V-SPEC II

Year: 1994 | Power: 276hp | Weight: 1500kg | Drift or race it? Drift

HONDA INTEGRA TYPE R

Year: 2004 | Power: 216hp | Weight: 1180kg | Drift or race it? Race

INFINITI G35 COUPE

Year: 2006 | Power: 297hp | Weight: 1598kg | Drift or race it? Drift

MAZDA EUNOS ROADSTER

Year: 1989 | Power: 118hp | Weight: 940kg | Drift or race it? Both

SUZUKI CAPPUCINO

Year: 1995 | Power: 63hp | Weight: 690kg | Drift or race it? Park it

Drift Mode

GT's 'controversial' new mode explained

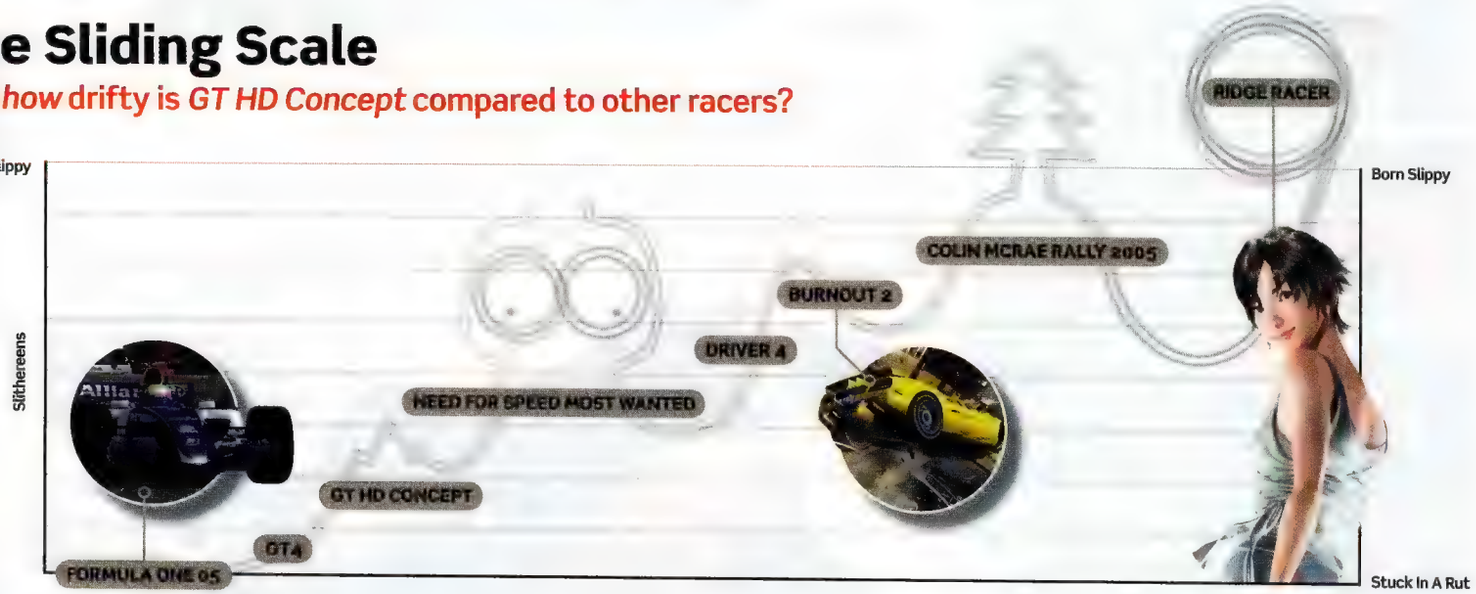
Gran Turismo has always been very 'sensible,' encouraging speed and accuracy over flamboyance. And, the wet Route 5 stage aside, it's always been hard to maintain a slide with *GT*'s unforgiving tyres. That's changed.

In Drift, you must fill a meter by sliding. The bigger and longer the slide, the quicker it fills. Trouble is, you're judged over a series of turns and the points aren't 'banked' until you leave the section. Spin out or hit something and you're back to zero. For the highest scores, then, you'll need to go from one slide to another with barely a pause.

Happily, you can swap tyres very rapidly in *Concept* (no garages or loading), so it's worth experimenting with harder, less grippy rears. Times and scores are uploaded to the online rankings, and should you score top ten, your replay will be available for all to see – Drift mode performances will be hard-fought and closely watched.

The Sliding Scale

Just *how* drifty is *GT HD Concept* compared to other racers?



What's next for GT5?

How *Concept* needs to evolve to become the driver of our dreams...

1 Photo mode

Creator Kazunori Yamauchi's a big fan, and has suggested it may become a download for *Concept*.

2 Downloadable content

A year to make all those cars? *GT HD* may be dead, but some will appear post-*GT5*'s release, in the form of downloadable content, accessible at the PlayStation Store. Make them cheap, ta.

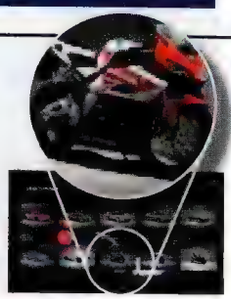
3 Big drops

Backdrops get ever more dramatic, but what's the fun of racing on the Grand Canyon or up Pikes Peak with no danger of going off?

4 Lamborghinis included

Make it so.

5 Bikes



They were announced. Where have they gone?

PSM3 Reckons

It's hard to argue with something when it's free, but we're going to. While *GT HD Concept* is an improvement – and gorgeous on PS3 – it's only by a matter of degrees. Fans will love the subtle changes to existing genius. The rest might wonder what the fuss is about...

Playing PlayStation Longer Harder Deeper

Extended Play

Start

GENIUS

86 10 reasons why *Okami* is a work of monumental genius
Featuring tiny gods and urinating wolves.

EXPLOITS

90 Beat the baddest bosses in *Def Jam: Fight For New York*
Live the dream – kick Sean Paul's face in.

SECRETS

94 See *SSX3*'s most amazing jump
Hurtling off the third peak – you won't believe your eyes.

SECRETS

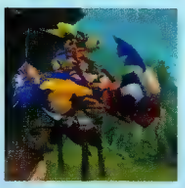
95 PlayStation's biggest secrets busted wide open
Starring *Driv3r*, *Psi-Ops* and *Viewtiful Joe*.

SECRETS

95 Dressing for success – and murder – in *Hitman: Blood Money*
Old slaphead's fanciest killing togs unveiled.

ONLINE

96 Waging an online war in *Call Of Duty 3*
Taking the conflict to the internet isn't without its problems.



CLASSIC

98 How *Jak And Daxter* nearly saved the platform game.
Why a boy and his ottsel became PS2 heroes.

NATION

100 Sony's million quid PS3 palace
Sony create a massive plush house full of PS3's, that you can't visit. Boo.

PLAYSTATION CELEBRATION

Seven best Devil May Cry bosses

If a man defines himself by his enemies, then *Devil May Cry*'s Dante must be borderline schizophrenic. One minute he's fighting hell's lava-spewing minions – the next he's shooting a giant canary on a pirate ship. Before lunch he's murdering hordes of marionettes – after teatime he's slicing up an orangutan in an abandoned train station. In a world of increasingly humanoid bosses, *Devil May Cry* takes the grand old tradition of packing some of the most mis-shapen, misguided and mental bosses possible into every level. And here we salute them. Well, most of them.

ARKHAM

In a twist that only Dante, people who haven't seen the Usual Suspects and the criminally insane couldn't see coming, the real villain of *Devil May Cry* turns out to be Vergil's bald, scarred, evil-looking butler. How's he been avoiding suspicion? Why, by dressing up as an unkillable, confetti-bleeding jester, of course. Yeah, you heard.

Duh!

LADY

Only sort of a boss, because Dante's only fighting her to stop her endangering herself by leaping into hell – but she does shoot you in the forehead... *and* she carries a bazooka with her dear departed mum's name etched into the handle. If Lady was real, she'd be prettier than Natalie Portman and just as intimidatingly unattainable. She's not real, though. Sadly.

NEVAN

Nevan feels like a placeholder sort of boss. Yeah, everybody likes a naked redhead covered in bats, but it feels sort of like programmer shorthand for 'put proper boss in here'. Unrelatedly, Nevan was the exact point in DMC3 where most people finally cracked and restarted on easy, because after you'd shot her six million times she started getting her energy back. Oh, and if you beat her, the bats turn into an electric guitar. Obviously.

VERGIL

Dante's brother pops up three times as a boss, boasting cooler hair, better swords and a nicer jacket than his foppish twin. Standout moment? The bit when Dante shoots at him and he catches the bullets by twirling his sword, then throws them back. What a guy.

AGNI AND RUDRA

The PJ and Duncan of *Devil May Cry 3* – two muscular demons who keep their heads on their sword hilts. Kill one of them, and the remaining one combines both of their blades into one super-chopper. Kill both, and they beg to come with you. Dante, never gracious in victory, agrees on the condition that they shut up. Reasonable enough.

ARIUS

The main villain of *DMC2* – we're not counting uber-boss Argosax, because he was just a load of other bosses squashed into a heaving ball of evil – Arius ticks all the 'evil businessman' boxes. He wears a fur coat! He smokes a cigar! He's got a tache! Oh, and he's investing in technology that lets him create demons on a whim. Brilliant.

Devil May Cry 4

Pay attention, because this is confusing: if you kill more than 100 demons during *DMC3*'s closing credits, you're treated to a cut-scene showing Vergil fighting *DMC1* uber-boss Mundus. Unfortunately, he loses, gets brainwashed, and turns into dark knight Nelo Angelo - as seen in *DMC1*. He's apparently dead - but the new main character of *DMC4* is called Nero Angelo (bear in mind that Rs and Ls are written as the same character in Japanese) and looks exactly like Vergil with his hair swept down. Even more confusingly, new Nero's part of the Order Of The Sword, an organisation dedicated to the worship of Dante's dad Sparda. The new game's set after *DMC1* – where Nelo apparently dies – but before *DMC2*, where Dante's very much still alive. Our guess: Nero is actually Dante's brother. Or his son. Or a clone. And the whole thing's set on the moon. Maybe.

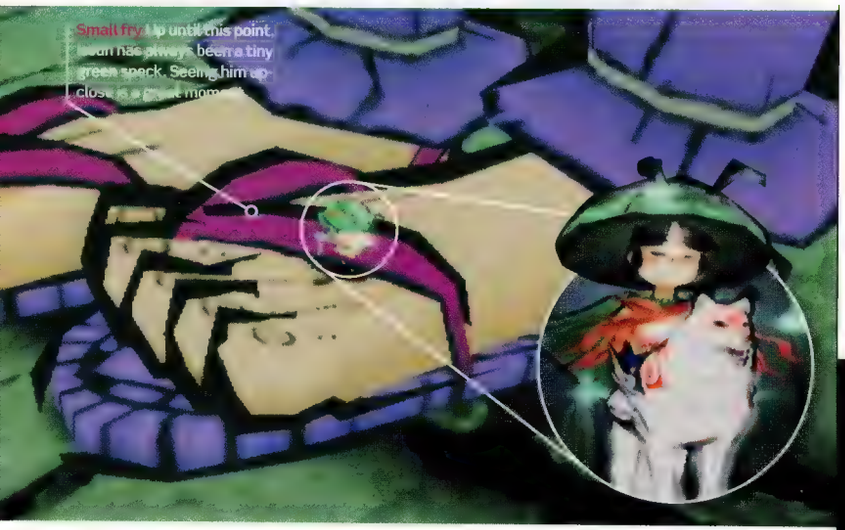
Pub Capcom
Dev Clover
FYI PS2 | 2007 | PSM84 95%
Okami's world is huge, full of secrets and things to discover. It's the richest, most consistently-entertaining action RPG ever. And it looks nice too.

10 reasons why Okami is a mad masterpiece

Andy Kelly

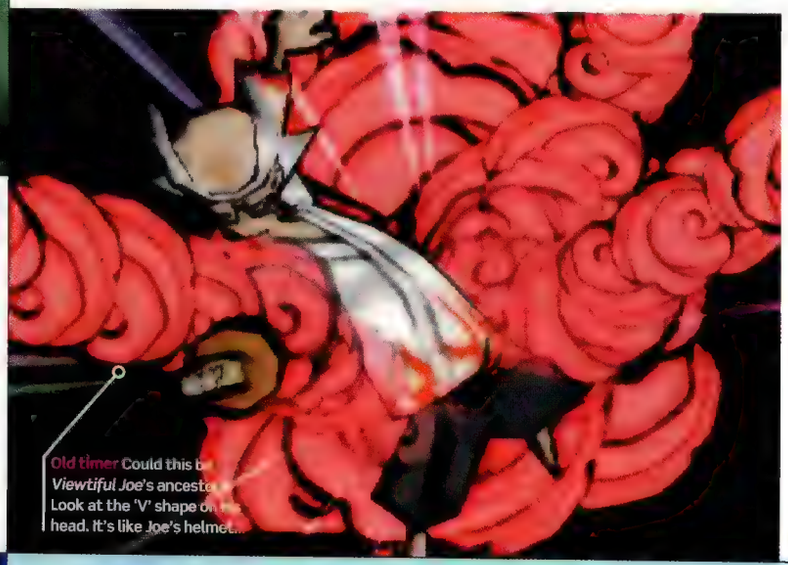
1 IT LETS YOU CONTROL TIME

One of the most visually-appealing and useful abilities is being able to control the time of day by drawing either a sun or a moon in the sky. Draw a moon and the bright sky will be slowly consumed by bleeding black ink, bringing with it nightfall. Draw a sun and a gorgeous spinning orb of heavenly glory makes it sparkle and scares off tougher enemies. This becomes more and more useful later in the game when certain missions only become available at a certain time of day. At night pubs and bars will be full of people who may have vital clues for you, but during the day they're empty, which is a good example of where the ability comes in useful.



3 THE INSANE DOJO MASTER

At first glance this old codger looks pretty pathetic for an all-knowing, all-powerful dojo master, but give him enough yen and he transforms, *Viewtiful Joe*-style, into a flame-licked martial arts genius. He forces Amaterasu to attack a wooden dummy, getting peeved when you mess it up. As you traverse Nippon he appears in different locations, like *Resident Evil 4*'s merchant, offering bizarre, expensive fighting moves.



2 YOU CAN SHRINK YOURSELF

Amaterasu's sidekick Issun is a Poncle – tiny men who ride on the backs of gods. When Amaterasu shrinks, Issun, now a 'full-sized' man, is riding on *her* back. The pair sneak through a garden in the emperor's castle, dodging enormous feet, spiders and brooms. Later they climb down his throat and into his stomach to fight an evil monster. To escape, Issun tickles the emperor's tonsils until he sneezes the duo out.

5 CLIMBING THE CATCALL TOWER

Far in the distance to the north of Ryoshima Coast is an enormous tower stretching for miles into the sky. Travel there and you'll see paw marks printed on the side, which let Amaterasu cling to the wall and climb up. What follows is ten straight minutes of climbing. There are platforms every now and then to give you time to rest, but it's still an ordeal. Get to the top and you free a crying cat from its lofty prison and earn a new brush power – but the best bit is jumping off the side. You fall for about a minute and we actually felt our stomach churn a little as the ground drew closer.

Tall tale Huge, ain't it? And you have to climb *all* the way up it. Oh, dear.

4 MARKING YOUR TERRITORY

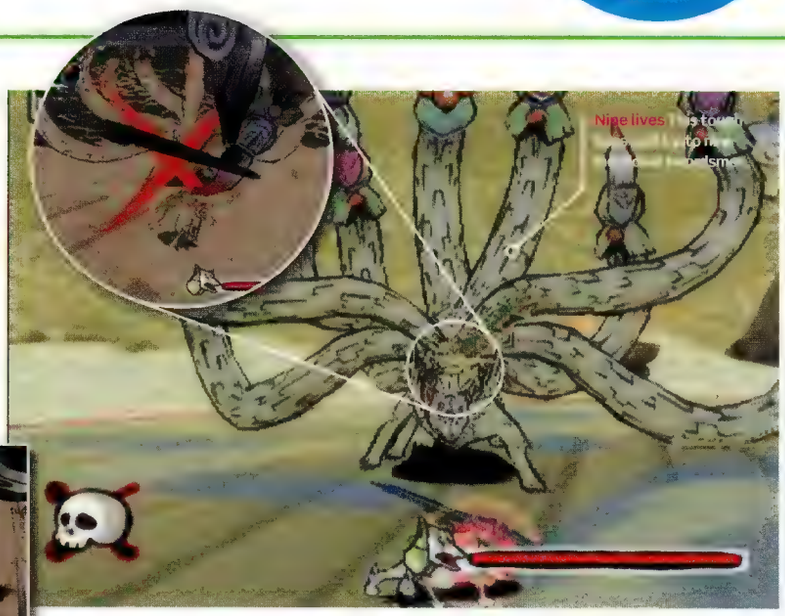
Buy the 'golden fury' technique from the dojo at Ryoshima Coast and, amazingly, Amaterasu can lift her leg and spray the enemy with a hot jet of winkle juice. Not only is this the ultimate insult to the marauding demons, but it makes them so mad that their teeth fall out, which can be traded in for rare treasures. Later, there's a technique that lets you curl out turds that explode when your foes wander near.

ON THE DISC
Listen to our Okami review on [illegible] month's disc

6 BRUSH ATTACK THE LOCALS

You can use Amaterasu's brush to infuriate the residents of Nippon. You can draw all over them and cover them ink, which they'll angrily shake off. In fact, most of the brush powers have an effect – toasting people with fire, blowing them backwards with wind, knocking them into the air with cherry bombs... you name it, you can use it to annoy folk. You can also grab onto their arses with your teeth and drag them along the ground.

Fall guy Here we're using our power slash to knock these two guards on their arses.



Nine lives This is to[illegible] into h[illegible]sm

7 FIGHTING NINETAILS

Up until this boss battle you've always felt unstoppable, but then Ninetails rears its nine ugly heads. Whenever you go to paint an attack another red ink-tipped brush comes in and scribbles over your strokes – and he's a faster and better painter than you. Luckily his sword is vulnerable to lightning attacks, and there just so happens to be a storm brewing in the skies above...

8 GONE FISHIN'

Fishing in games is notoriously rubbish, but in *Okami* it's a bit different. This fella here is Benkei and he used to be a master swordsman, but gave up to pursue a life of fishing. To begin, you actually draw in the fishing line from the end of his rod to a passing fish. You then yank the little sucker in and slash it with your celestial brush to catch it when it rears its head. There's an exhaustive 'fish tome' in the pause menu that you'll find yourself religiously trying to fill, and some towns offer lots of money for rarer fish – especially if they're large. This is one of the game's biggest money-spinners, but hooking the bigger fish is a real struggle.

Minuscule Look at this pathetic, tiny thing. Eh? No, the *fish*! Not... that. No. *That's* huge.

Artistic We esch[illegible] traditional Japanese strokes for a gormless, poorly-drawn grinning face

9 START A FASHION CRAZE

In Sei-an city, visit kimono designer Mr Chic by the canal. Enter his house and he'll ask you to design a new pattern on an enormous kimono pinned to the wall. Whatever you draw, it'll start appearing around the city on peoples' clothes, scribbled on walls, on umbrellas – and there's even a little girl who doodles your 'masterwork' all over her school's playground with charcoal. And, yes, you *can* draw men's dinkles.

Love life And now the cat loves us and goes to sleep. Awww.
Cat power Here we've given a passing moggy a big bowl of delicious fish. Aw.
Dogs body Feed them wild dogs some meat and they'll yelp and skip about, licking your face. Awwwwwww.

10 FEEDING THE ANIMALS

Run up to an animal and you can feed it by pressing ◎. Not only does this earn Amaterasu experience points, but it also lets you watch a sweet, pointless cut-scene where she watches intently as the critter scoffs down his grub. Certain animals eat certain types of food, all of which can be bought from merchants, so for example tigers like meat and birds like seeds. But if you're tired of being nice, you can bark at them, but then you have to pick them up in your mouth or headbutt them into the air. But that's hardly appropriate behaviour for the goddess of the sun, is it? But even gods need time off...

The ones we didn't pick...

Monsters in disguise
One mission sees Amaterasu meeting Shinsue Lemmings. Fantastic! Unfortunately, it's followed by the most frustrating, boring, pointless mission ever. Like a Lemmings level but with the Lemmings replaced by Lemmings that don't do anything. Well, that's not entirely true, actually. They...

Crime fighter
In Seian city you can help the local guards, but there's notoriously thieving...

Digging minigame
This game sees you [illegible]

EMAIL PSM3 @
Disagree with our choice? Then send us your picks
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

ON THE DISC
See PS3's *Def Jam: Icon* on next month's disc

PLAYSTATION EXPLOITS

The baddest bosses in Def Jam: Fight For New York

Nathan Irvine

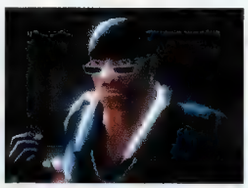
EMAIL PSM3 @
Want a game exploded in ludicrous detail? Tell us.
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Pub EA
Dev EA
FYI PS2 | 2004 | PSM54 86%
Packed with hardcore hip-hop tunes and even harder fighting moves, *Def Jam: FFNY* is one of the most brutal scrappers on PS2. From slamming your opponent headfirst into a pool table to flinging them under a speeding subway train, this sold scrapper has got the lot.

BEAT THE BOSSES 25 baddest asses in Def Jam

It may be pushing three years old, but *Def Jam: Fight For New York* still stands out as one of the most brutal beat-'em-ups on PS2. Go and pick it up second-hand, then get stuck into the top 25 bosses – with our help.

Fight... Trejo
Beat him This South American gringo loves a grapple, so keep your distance and try some running attacks to wear him down. Once he's a little groggy, twist his sweet 'tache into submission.



Fight... Ice-T
Beat him He's stronger than he looks, favouring a selection of submission moves to break you down. But you can melt Ice by dodging his flying attacks and countering as he lies prone.

Fight... Sean Paul
Beat him Jamaica's whitest man will come at you with a set of kung-fu moves. He's quick and his kicks are real strong. Block his combos and when he misses his big hit, come out swinging and repeat.

Fight... WC
Beat him Despite having the initials of a toilet, this guy isn't easy to flush. There aren't many interactive points to do him in with, so make sure you use all the weapons to hand to secure victory.

Fight... Crack
Beat him By the time you get to this tubby grappler, you should be pretty handy. Mix up your moves and block his long range haymaker to gain the upper hand. It's KO time if he connects.

Fight... Crazy Legs
Beat him This whirling B-boy is tricky to pin down – he relentlessly spins out deadly kicks. But he's pretty weak, so if you nail him with some running attacks you shouldn't have too much trouble.

Fight... Slick Rick
Beat him Don't let this oily character get to grips with you – he immediately follows up a pummelling with a submission move. Smash him to bits with bottles and hit him with running attacks.

Fight... Magic
Find it Thankfully you get to fight Busta Rhy... sorry, 'Magic' in a parking lot *full* of interactive spots. Get straight at him and chuck him into the cars around the arena, but beware his submission moves.

Fight... Bonecrusher
Beat him Like all giant strongmen, this fella is super-tough, but slow. Reverse his constant grapple attempts and pick him off with some stinging quick strikes. He'll drop like a flabby stone.

Fight... Mack 10
Beat him One of the more average fighters that you'll come across. Just don't do anything stupid – like forgetting to block – and you really shouldn't have a problem here.

Fight... Xzibit
Beat him The X-man has a filthy habit of sticking his knee into your nose, so reverse his clinches. Fling him into the environmental hotspots and use the host of weapons to wear him down.

Fight... David Banner
Beat him He's another example of brawn over speed, which makes him prone to running attacks and counter moves. But don't get caught up in one of his combos or you'll be chewing concrete in no time.

Fight... Henry Rollins
Beat him He'll usually try to break you down with a series of strikes, so make sure you've got your defensive head screwed on. Dodge and block, then get him into a grapple to defeat him.

Fight... Memphis Bleek
Beat him This guy's a solid all-rounder. He favours punches and kicks, but block these strikes for too long and he'll go in for the grapple. Reverse this and you'll have him licked.

Fight... Ghostface Killah
Beat him Despite trying his best to mimic the Craig David parody from Bo Selecta (see the kestrel on his wrist), GK is a tough customer. Fortunately, you can kick him through the rails for a quick ring-out.

Fight... N.O.R.E.
Beat him One of the only fighters in the game to really mix up his attacks and keep you on your toes. There are a fair few environmental spots to ram him into, then pummel him with strikes.

Fight... Erick Sermon
Beat him He pumped up, but he's a bit soft. He's can't block well, so just let fly with a flurry of attacks and he'll roll over like an obedient puppy. Don't try tickling his belly, mind. Stamp on it instead.

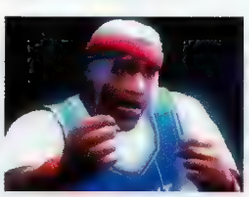
Fight... Capone
Beat him No relation to the infamous gangster, Capone whacks you with some serious punches. The key here is to block his attacks and hit back with the weapons chucked into the arena.

Fight... Scarface
Beat him Your biggest danger here is how quickly this fella can enter Blazin' mode – he likes to taunt and play to the crowd. He's vulnerable when doing this, though, so get inside and do some serious hitting.

Fight... Flava Flav
Beat him Set his clock to 'ass whooping time' by forcing him into grapples. He's fairly weak, but can cause problems with his strike flurries – so make sure you defend against his combos.

Fight... Ludacris
Beat him Luda fights fair and rarely grabs weapons from the crowd. Fool. Use these tools to smash his face up and wear him down. He doesn't like to grapple either, so don't worry about getting in close.

Fight... Teck
Beat him A tricky customer, Teck is hard to break down with normal attacks so try entering Blazin' mode to batter him. Oh, and he always follows up a strike combo with a grapple, so watch out.



Fight... Doc
Beat him Doc likes to prescribe a lot of heavy kicks as your medicine. Running attacks work well against him, and try blocking his kick combos to gain the upper hand.

Fight... Sticky Fingaz
Beat him Biff this guy up with a few grapples and he'll begin to relent. This is when you fling him into the searing hot flames that make up the arena. You'll toast him in a matter of minutes.

Fight... Crow
Beat him You start the fight against Mr Dogg flat on your back, so get up quick and throw him against the window pane. Three direct hits and you'll have completed the game. And that's a (w)rap.

Blazin' FAQ

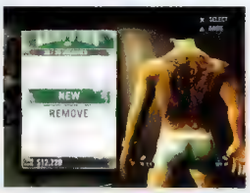
Q What's all this about Blazin' moves? Are they important or not?

A Blazin' moves [illegible] are a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

IMAGE Own the crowd

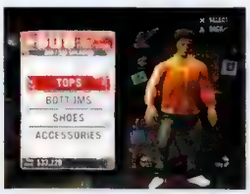
Don't forget to freshen up your appearance. The better you look, the more the crowd gee you up and the quicker you'll enter Blazin' mode. Being fashionable is the secret to success.

Step 1... Get a haircut
Visit Stingray's barber shop and he'll fix you up with a cutting edge hairstyle and shave. Get it dyed to look even more outrageous and please the crowd.



Step 2... Get inked
Go to Manny's tattoo parlour and you can ink up anywhere on your body. Pick something garish for maximum benefit. Nice boxers, by the way.

Step 3... Bling it up
No hip-hop brawler would be complete without enough diamonds to dazzle a rabbit. Don't accept anything less than diamonds, mind, or it's not worth it.



Step 4... Change clothes
Snowman might be a bad boy wannabe, but he stocks the clothes that'll get you noticed in the ring. Spend any spare cash here and jazz up your look often.

Step 5... Play to the crowd
You're looking like a million dollars, so give the crowd a show. Use the right stick to taunt and play to the crowd and you'll be Blazin' faster than a petrol bomb..

THE LADIES Don't you wish your girlfriend was hot like these?

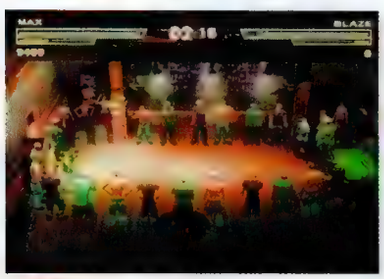
Lil' Kim The most instantly recognisible of all the women, rapper Lil' Kim, is also the most dangerous. She's super-quick and tough like leather. Her 'lady satchels' are a shade distracting, too.

Cindy J Has the strongest upper-body strength of all the ladies, and the speed to match. She's a solid all-rounder and can give the fellas a good run for their money. Not like that.

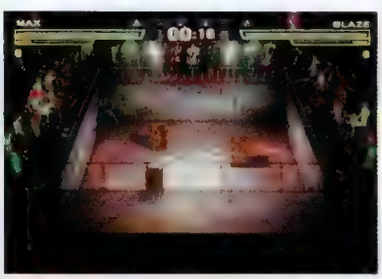
Shawnna Her top may look like it's been customised with a pair of scissors, but Shawnna is a cut above when it comes to charisma – meaning she's an undisputed crowd favourite.

Kimora This kimono-wearing gal can really take a beating thanks to her high stamina, and she's got the leg power to cause some serious damage. She can kimono-ver to our place any time.

VENUES Tricky arenas



The Limit This bar-room is packed with useful furniture to batter your opponent with. Tucked away to the left of the arena is a jukebox, and to the right a pool table. Make use of both.



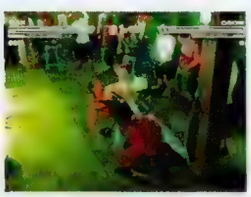
The Terror Dome A claustrophobic venue lacking weapons, so you'll have to use the walls and girders as instruments of pain. Dodge when your enemy goes for a flying kick and you'll do well.

The Chopshop Another small place, but thankfully the crowd are very generous when it comes to handing out bars, wrenches and the like. Grab these quickly to win.

Red Hook Tire Co. The most dramatic of all the stages is this burning warehouse. The ring of fire creates a deadly barrier, so make sure you throw your enemy into it as often as possible.

HURT SPOTS Use your environment

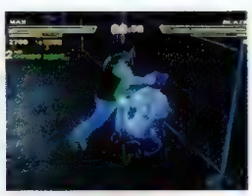
As well as being able to pull weapons from crowds or pick up ones that have been thrown into the ring, you can also use your surroundings to dole out beatings. Here are the most brutal...



Use... A pillar
This is probably the most common piece of furniture you'll be able to use in the game. You can slam a guy's head into it or simply suplex them face first onto it.

Use... A vending machine
At the subway station, this drink dispenser is perfect for chucking your opponent into. Then, when he slumps against it, slam his head into the glass.

Use... A JCB
There's a satisfying clanging sound as your foe is flung into the hard steel of the JCB's bucket. Keep bashing away until his face resembles a builder's bum.



Use... A wire fence
Sadly, the fence in this power plant isn't electrified, but that doesn't stop the shocking sight of your rival squirming as you grate his face across it. Ouch.

Use... A car
The horns toot and alarms go off as you maul your opponent against the sides of vehicles. You can throw each other through the windscreens, too.

KEEP GOING The final fights

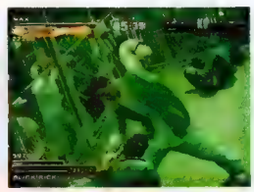
Send Crow flying to his death and you can go back to Story mode for more scraps. These challenges consist of multiple rounds – meaning you don't get your health back, so be careful.

Beat... The Pit
This four-way free-for-all is easy. Pick off one guy and let the other two go at it like knives. Wait until one drops, then finish the other one quickly.

Beat... The Terror Dome
You're teamed up with Crack for this bout. He might be strong, but he's susceptible to getting whooped. Keep tabs on his health and make sure he doesn't get KO'd.

Beat... 125 Street Station
This subway match is tricky. Don't get caught up in a scuffle near the platform edge – bide your time, then knock a weakened opponent onto the rails.

Beat... Scrap Yard
The only time you get to go toe-to-toe with D-Mob. He's pretty easy to deal with if you can get inside his strikes quickly. Make the most of the environment.



Beat... Club Murder
The final battle sees you duke it out with only two other people. Let them wear each other down, then pile in there and take out their sorry asses.

ON THE DISC
More EA sporting action in NBA Street Homecourt

PLAYSTATION SECRETS

Cruising the epic third peak to Royksopp's Poor Leno in SSX3

"Like looking at the surface of the moon"

1 Hitch a ride

Rotor storm The loading binoculars really intensive, but indeed interesting scale. As the plane ascends the towering third peak, it's almost like looking down on the surface of the moon. Dazzling sunlight amplifies the ethereal, soothing scenes below.

2 Drop in

Legends of the fall You drop headlong from the plane's cargo doors into an explosion of fluffy white powder, as the sun flares in the twinkling blue horizon. It's staggeringly beautiful, but there's no time to relax as the glacier collapses in terrifying chunks...

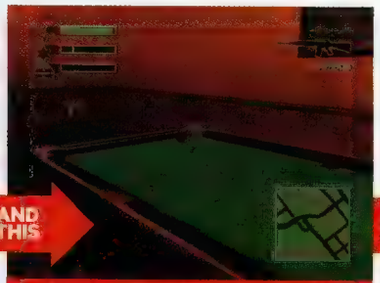
3 Tune out

Silent Chill Eventually, the harsh icy glacier relents to crunchy fresh snow, and you're left to cruise and carve the open slopes to the soothing strains of Royksopp's Poor Leno. Exhilaration melts to relief. SSX3's taken you to a place you've never been before.

PlayStation's best kept secrets uncovered every month

Madness › Driv3r › Get sidetracked

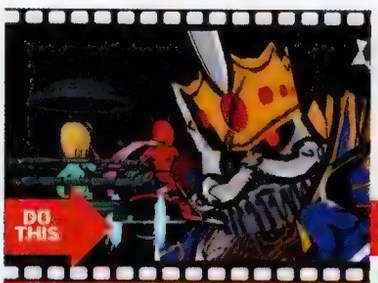
Head to the bridge by Miami monorail, and press the switch to enjoy cars falling into the river.



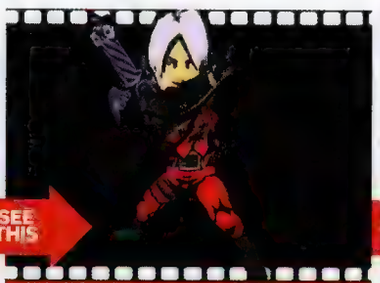
In a burned-out car in the tower, shoot the balls with your gun for literally *seconds* of fun.

In Nice, pick a truck, then drive right into a sports car's bonnet and take to the air.

Classic character › Viewtiful Joe › Dante



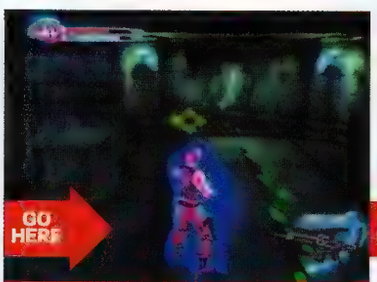
Finish *Viewtiful Joe*. OK, it's one of the hardest games in the world, but crack on. We'll wait.



You'll unlock Dante from *Devil May Cry* as a playable character. Wowzers.

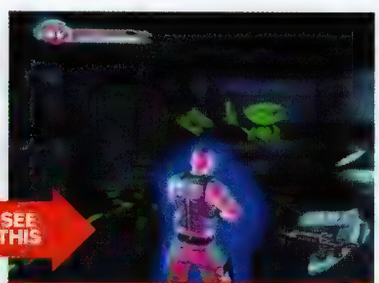
And here he is in action. That was worth all the tears of frustration in finishing the game, eh?

Secret rooms › Psi-Ops › Power-ups and messages



In the last room, you'll see a crack in the wall. There's a secret room beyond.

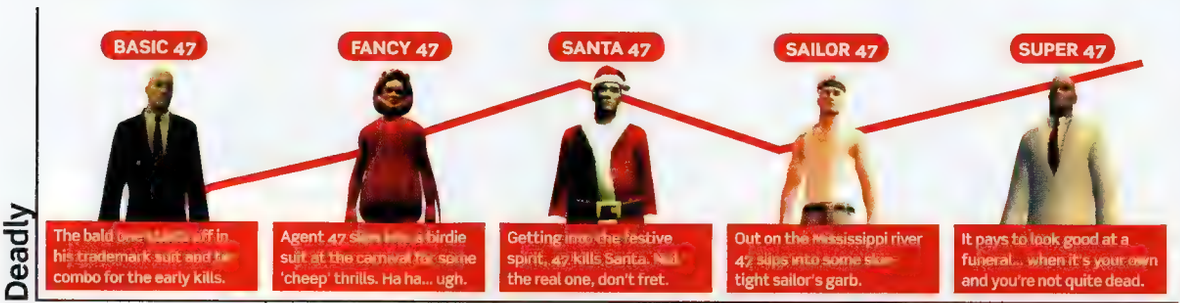
Beyond are loads of goodies for your pleasure.



Use Xu in the second room of Chapter 1, and you'll see this Big Brother-esque message.

From zero to hero in... Hitman: Blood Money

The murderous rise of Agent 47, from simple slaphead to sharp-suited psycho.



The bald [illegible] off in his trademark suit and tie combo for the early kills.

Agent 47 [illegible] a birdie suit at the carnival for some 'cheep' thrills. Ha ha... ugh.

Getting into the festive spirit, 47 kills Santa. Not the real one, don't fret.

Out on the Mississippi river 47 slips into some skin-tight sailor's garb.

It pays to look good at a funeral... when it's your own and you're not quite dead.

The Top 5

Cheats you *must* know

1 Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops

Unlock characters

Enter 'R.R.R.' as a password to unlock Ocelot, 'IVN=RV' for Raikov, 'PK+ESP' for Ursula and '1+2+3' for Major Zero.

2 Gun Showdown Bonus Deathmatch level

Enter "BADLANDS" as a profile name to unlock a bonus deathmatch level.

3 Star Trek: Tactical Assault

Unlock all ships

At the main menu, press ↑, ↓, ←, →, SELECT, START, ⊗ to unlock all ships available in all missions.

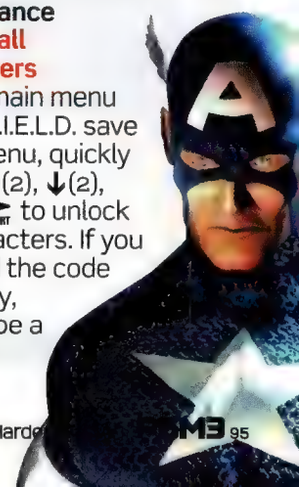
4 NBA 2K7 International All-Star Team

Enter 'tnsgroi' as a code to unlock the International All-star team for play.

5 Marvel: Ultimate Alliance

Unlock all characters

At the main menu or a S.H.I.E.L.D. save zone menu, quickly press ↑(2), ↓(2), ←(3), START to unlock all characters. If you entered the code correctly, there'll be a sound.



ON THE DISC
See Call of Duty's PS3 brother on next month's disc

PLAYSTATION ONLINE

Struggling to start a war in Call of Duty 3

Justin Towell

Pub Activision
Dev Treyarch
FYI PS2 | 2006 | PSM2 88%
The sixth entry in the *Call Of Duty* series so far (despite the '3'). CoD3 is a supremely playable World War 2 shooter. With some daft new melee sections, but brilliant set-pieces and shooting action, you'll doubtless enjoy this. But it is just more of the same.

War is hell. But if you take *Call Of Duty 3* online, it isn't the fighting itself that's so bad - it's getting into a game. We tried so many times to join a match, only to be told we couldn't connect or that the session no longer existed. We considered risking a court marshal and abandoning duty, but then finally - *finally* - we did get into some action - and had a great time.

The game supports up to 16 players at once, but we found ourselves a nice little Normandy-based Battle (read: Deathmatch) with seven opponents on the Roen map. This level allows for some neat threats, as players hide at the upper windows of shelled-out houses or lurk in doorways in the street. One fella thought it was a great idea to lie down in a bush - the trouble being, it wasn't as thick as him. Result? Easiest kill ever. The stage was perhaps a little too big for the number of players we had, but this meant a fair bit of cat and mouse gaming, which worked well. We chose to snipe most of the time - lying in wait before finally squeezing the trigger for a headshot kill. Satisfying... in a sick kind of way.

Share the stealth

The online game is generally played in a much more tactical way than the fast-paced single-player mode, as the combat's near one-hit-kill mechanic makes running into the open with guns blazing sure suicide. The tension was high as a result - so high, in fact, we physically jumped when we were shot after a particularly long period of silent stalking.

There are the usual game types, including Capture The Flag, but we found the good old Everyone Have A Massive Rumble (not actual title) the most fun. Having said that, the lobby was *full* of Team battles. If only we could connect...

Call Of Duty 3 is lag-free and the frame-rate is decent. In fact, once you get going, nothing gets in the way of the killing. The problem is getting going in the first place. If you can persuade the game to let you connect, then an online tour of duty is well worth it. That's a big 'if', though.

ONLINE VERDICT

Lots of players? Yes, but joining them is damn-near impossible
Buy it just for online? Not unless you have the patience of a dozen saints.

GAMEPLAY Defining moment

Watching from a distance, we squeeze L1 to zoom in on the window ahead. We can see movement within. Sure, enough, it's a sniper. But he hasn't seen us. Gently squeeze the trigger and... all gone.

Games can be over an hour long if you like – we tried a few of these and didn't get bored, so the game is certainly doing something right.

This is your plaything – another human being, somewhere in the world, is blissfully unaware you've got your sights trained on his head.

If you don't move or shoot, your dot won't be shown on the radar – so you'll be invisible to those not near you. So stop moving already.

FEATURES Bits and bobs

The game doesn't do anything particularly innovative, although what it does, it does very well. Here's a quick look at three neat reasons to take *Call Of Duty 3* online – although, of course, the main reason you should do so is because it's fun. Simple as that.

1 Host with the most

Don't you just hate it when the host disconnects and you're all dumped back in the lobby? Not here. We were impressed to see that *CoD3* continued without interference when our original host dropped out. Another player is selected at random to play as host and the only thing that alerts you to the change is a message. It even chose us at one point and we barely noticed. For a game so impressively solid once it's going, why is it such a bastard to connect? Bah.

2 Who's winning?

Push ▬ during play and you'll be given a rundown of exactly who it is you're playing against, which team they're on, plus how many kills and deaths everyone's notched up so far. All the statistics you could ever need, then. Of course, you can still be blasted to smithereens while you're checking all of this, so you'd best be quick or your body will be carted off to the morgue before you know it. As you can see, we were winning this one. Of course.

3 Information nation

You get the usual "PSM3 killed XXX" messages as you blow people away and everyone is regularly notified as to just how each kill was made, but apart from that (and a simple ammo counter and a radar) the screen is kept nice, neat and refreshingly clutter-free. We like the way the compass moves about just like a real compass – it keeps things historically accurate, which we like... although having said that, it does also have a radar built into it. Hmm.

LOBBY Join us...

'Instant action', eh? That's exactly what we're looking for. You can also set up your own match or search for one that suits your mood.

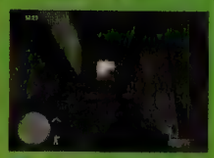
OK, we're joining a game. We're already eagerly anticipating our sweetheart's overjoyed kisses on our return.

What? OK, this *can* happen, but we saw this screen so much we feared the image might be burning into our TV. Infuriating.

Online Highlights

Match Report

1



2

3

4

5

Harshest insult

"Reloading is more challenging than killing you"

Community service

Current world champion

Name Hmm...
Rank points Erm...
Well, although previous Duties have offered online rankings, Call Of Duty 3, erm, doesn't. So there's no incentive to keep playing other than the satisfaction of blasting men to bits.

ON THE DISC
Platformer fan? Check out the new Jak trailer

PLAYSTATION CLASSIC

How Jak And Daxter almost saved platform games

Steve Williams

Pub Sony | **Dev** Naughty Dog
FYI PS2 | 2001 | PSM18 85%
A landmark platformer designed to show off the early PS2 – but managed to do far more than that. We underrated this

There's nice and there's nice. One is the corporate, insipid, enforced niceness that results from hundreds of cowards insisting nothing remotely meaningful happens in their game/film/election in case any potential buyer disagrees and is thus 'offended.' This is the most common kind of nice – think 'family' movies, Christmas Coke adverts and local DJs. Then there's the other kind – where something is simply good-hearted, and hasn't compromised itself to be that way because it's a genuine expression of good-hearted individuals. Think John Peel, Futurama or comedian Dara O'Briain. Or, to get to the point, *Jak And Daxter*.

Jak And Daxter is cheerful, bright and daft, and not to be dismissed for it. Their world is just as convincing as any *Grand Theft Auto* landscape – in fact, it's an even more welcome antidote to the 'gritty, dark, urban' lands of gangstas today than it was in 2001. There are just so many gritty, dark, urban worlds now and have become so standardised that they're practically the new Nice.

While *Jak And Daxter* singlehandedly revitalised platforming, however, it certainly didn't reinvent it. *J&D* pays massive homage to platformers past, gathering together the most successful elements and – this is the clever bit – dropping them into a thoroughly modern world. Designed specifically around the then-new PS2, it relied heavily on 'streaming' to create a huge, seamless world that did away with many equally established, but less desirable, genre staples.

EMAIL PSM3 @
What do you think of *Jak*? Let us know
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

No pause for thought

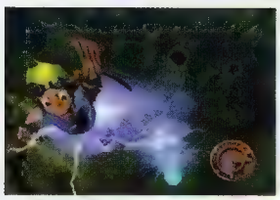
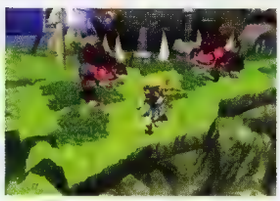
Constant loading and disruptive pauses were gone, and along with them went the idea of refilling areas with every item and enemy as soon as you left. The hub-and-spoke shaped world is affected permanently as you travel, rather than loading anew each time, bringing a far greater sense of immersion. If you can see it, you can go there, and if you climb any of the huge and often endearingly rickety structures, you can see an awfully long

The defining moment...

Go anywhere

How can you resist a world like that? GTA may have stolen the plaudits, but *J&D* was out soon after with a sprawling, boundary-free world that displayed at least as much imagination. Arguably, it looked better. The moment you realised you could visit anything, no matter how distant, was one to remember.

The *Jak and Daxter* Bell Curve of Genius

way. The ability to abandon something you're stuck on, without punishment, and go and do something else plays right into the cheerful calm of the blue-sky art style and Pixar-ish humour. It's both testing and entertaining, but still strangely relaxing for a platformer.

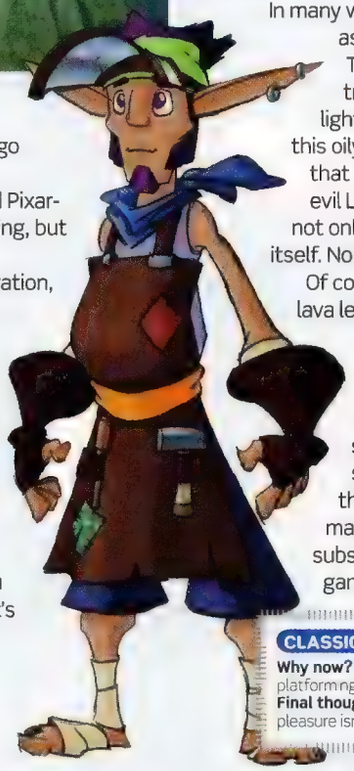
But then, the focus is far more on exploration, collection and puzzling than combat. Few games bother to aim for this balance, preferring instead to fill another corridor with more goons (sadly, even *Jak*'s sequels went dark, gritty and combat-based). There are relatively few bosses, too, which some bemoan but we like. Sure, you have the traditional spin attacks, head-jumping and lunges, but seeing as Jak can only take three hits before dying, it's probably for the best. You still face a fair few enemies, mind you, so it's not entirely Vicar Of Dibley.

Ottsel of the century

Traditionally there's little reason why things happen in a platformer, but *J&D* has a story. Yes, Daxter is an ottsel, but he was once a man – together with Jak, you're trying to reach a guy called Gol who can (probably) help turn him back again. So you must collect the power cells to operate the machinery you need to reach him. Even the other collectibles – such as the Precursor Orbs – are there to be traded for cells. Joyously, the pair's animations are as seamless as the world and (again like a good Pixar film) they're funny to watch as well as listen to. Daxter bounces around, complains, dances when you find a power cell and even hops off Jak's shoulder to try to pull him up from ledges. He is, in short, a twat. But a loveable ottsel one.

In many ways, the story is becoming more relevant as it ages; the 'green' parallels are obvious. The Precursors were an ancient race that tried to control the life force (the two-sided, light and dark Eco) but screwed things up. It's this oily Eco(logical) evil, hidden underground, that transformed Daxter, and it's this stuff the evil Lurkers are now trying to exploit. So you're not only trying to save Daxter, but the world itself. No pressure.

Of course, it's all pretty cheesy – say hello to lava levels, ice worlds, jungles, swamps and minecart rides – but it's just so stylishly exuberant you won't mind. What's more, the control combines suppleness with precision to make all the leapery highly satisfying. In fact, there's an obvious seam of quality right through it, and that will never disappear – no matter how many insipid, cravenly retarded platformers subsequently squeeze and plop out of gaming's big pump marked 'nice'.

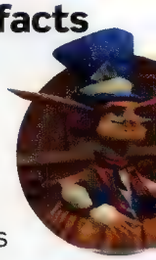


CLASSIC VERDICT

Why now? Time to remind yourself where platforming's gone wrong. Again.
Final thought It's all too rare proof that gaming pleasure isn't always a warm gun.

The Top 5

Jak & Daxter facts



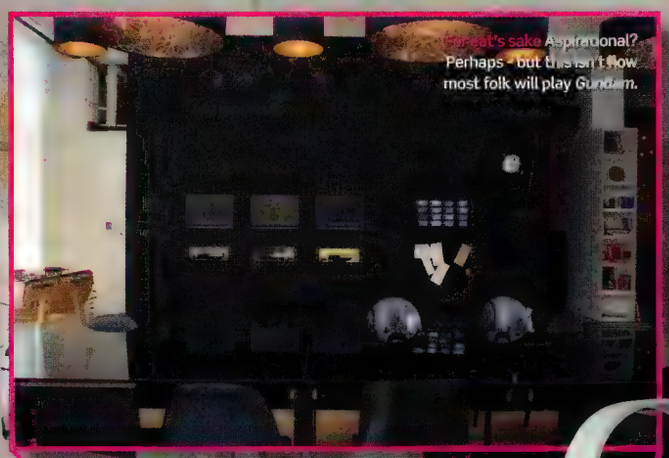
1 It was bugged
Talk to the Gambler once, then don't quit the race until you win. If you quit and talk to him again, a bug prevents you ever getting the last power cell from him.

2 Ooh, you are big
Most characters took the developers a day to finish once the wireframe was done, but the final boss was so big it took a week.

3 It had a secret
There's a second ending – if you've got all the power cells. Wait until the credits have finished, then open the door that appears...

4 It literally rocked
The voice of Gol was actually provided by Dee Snider – the frontman of Twisted Sister. They wrote I Wanna Rock, by the way, which you've heard in *Vice City*...

5 It took a while
The Precursor Orbs are egg-shaped, and there are 2000 of them to find. There are also 101 power cells...



For art's sake Aspirational? Perhaps - but this isn't how most folk will play *Gundam*.

PLAYSTATION NATION

Sony's secret PS3 house revealed

Louis Pattison

Feast your eyes on 3 Rooms. Mere months ago, this luxury pad was nothing more than a derelict warehouse space somewhere deep in Shoreditch's sprawling Truman's Brewery complex. Now, with a sizable cash injection from Sony, it's the very hub of the forthcoming PlayStation 3 ascendant in Europe. "It's designed as a sort of aspirational pad," explains 3 Rooms manager Simon Browning. "It's the place for a young couple between 25 and 35, or where a bunch of friends could hang out and play games." Chock-full of PS3s, this two-floor complex is zoned into different spaces to show off various aspects of the next-gen experience – hardcore gaming, Blu-ray movie viewing, digital connectivity... you name it, it's there. And it doesn't stop there: there's some very comfortable chaise-lounges, and there are even PSPs wired into the doors of the toilets so you can have a play if you're on a sit-down job (no, we didn't). So how does the casual gamer blag their way into these hallowed walls, then?

Well, it's tricky – right now, 3 Rooms is only open to trade people, media types, and gaming big-wigs. But keep your eyes peeled – Sony promise entry to a select band of lucky competition winners, so watch this space.

The house contains 13 (hidden) PS3s

"There are even PSPs wired into the doors of the toilets, so you can play while sitting down"

Drape expectations
the jedi coun
er, where ar

ON THE DISC
Check out the PS2 reviews section for the latest games

PS2 Playlist

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
FOOTBALL	**PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Konami Dynamics **Web** pesfan.com "A slower, more physical and realistic sim of football's highs and lows. Probably the best *Evolution* yet." **PSM3 Rating** 91%	**WINNING ELEVEN 10** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** KCET | **Web** pesfan.com "Once you master the passing game, you'll be stroking the ball around like Arsenal at their most fluid." **PSM3 Rating** 90%	**FIFA 07** **Pub** EA | **Dev** EA | **Web** easports.com "As a package, *FIFA* takes some beating. In terms of gameplay, it's still not *PES*, but it's just shy of excellent." **PSM3 Rating** 84%
SURVIVAL HORROR	**RESIDENT EVIL 4** **Pub** Capcom | **Dev** Capcom | **Web** capcom.com/resevil4 "Every second of play feels polished to perfection, like a game that's been playtested for hours on end." **PSM3 Rating** 97%	**THE SILENT HILL COLLECTION** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Konami **Web** silenthillheaven.com "Hours of quality adventuring and, if you're after scares, there's nothing else quite like it." **PSM3 Rating** 89%	**COLD FEAR** **Pub** Ubisoft | **Dev** Darkworks **Web** coldfeargame.com "Waves tear over the side of the ship, splattering the camera. It looks magnificent." **PSM3 Rating** 83%
EXTREME SPORTS	**SSX TRICKY** **Pub** EA | **Dev** EA | **Web** easportsbig..com "Edgy, funky, cool with outrageously compulsive gameplay and riotous effects. On the verge of perfection." **PSM3 Rating** 95%	**TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3** **Pub** Activision | **Dev** Neversoft | **Web** planettonyhawk.com "The greatest skater on PS2. Urban and instantly accessible, with online play and a pile of staggering surprises." **PSM3 Rating** 96%	**SSX 3** **Pub** EA | **Dev** EA **Web** easportsbig.com "A gleeful kinetic rush, twinning ace controls to excellent graphics." **PSM3 Rating** 94%
ONLINE	**METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Konami **Web** konami.com "One of the best games ever, with excellent online options. A must-have." **PSM3 Rating** 93%	**SOCOM 2: US NAVY SEALS** **Pub** SCEA | **Dev** Zipper | **Web** socom2.playstation.com "*SOCOM 2* is immersive, dramatic, exciting, detailed and absolutely worth hooking your PS2 up to broadband for." **PSM3 Rating** 92%	**PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6** **Pub** Konami | **Dev** Konami | **Web** pesfan.com "Eminently playable, ridiculously detailed, horribly addictive, and even better than the real thing." **PSM3 Rating** 91%

Aaargh! Games harder than steel-tipped steel

EVIL

Ultimate Ghosts 'N Goblins

Pub Capcom | **Dev** Capcom
Web www.capcom.com/ugng
This remake of the platforming series for PSP was faithful in more than just looks and atmosphere – its difficulty level made us scream even more than the original did, all those (too many) years ago. We're the kings of swearing now.
PSM3 Rating 66%

ROCK

Alien Hominid

Pub Zoo | **Dev** Behemoth
Web alienhominid.com
It's that game you might have played on the net, on your PS2. A typical outing goes like this: jump, die, shoot, die, jump, shoot, die, die. And so on. It's such a test of your reflexes that we recommend a caffeine enema beforehand.
PSM3 Rating 74%

SOLID

Devil May Cry 3

Pub Capcom | **Dev** Capcom
Web devilmaycry.com
Not the rather easier *DMC3: Special Edition*, but the tougher-than-varnished steak original game. Just the first stage is hard beyond belief, and when you're offered Easy mode after a couple of early deaths, you know you've been humiliated.
PSM3 Rating 89%

Disagree with our choices? Write us an explosive mail telling us why we're complete idiots. Lob your word bombs at psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "WRONG!"

Back issues
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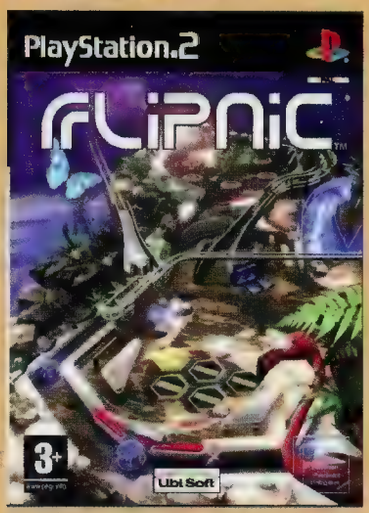
Why didn't anyone buy...?

They reviewed it... No-one bought it... We explain



Flipnic

Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Sony
Web ubi.com

Pinball these days is about as fashionable as Spam and, like Spam, no matter how much people try to reinvent it (Spam up, indeed), it's never going to be popular again. *Flipnic* being a case in point. An excellent game, it was, and one that completely overhauled the very concept of the silver ball... and was routinely ignored by all and sundry.

Because *Flipnic* wasn't just a bog-standard set of tables – it was, for want of a better phrase, 'concept pinball', a series of interlinked tables each with their own theme, and rammed with minigames. So one second you'd be bouncing around the geometry table – which paid homage to the block-breaking gameplay of *Breakout* – and then you'd be on the space-age table, where you'd be faced with a ball-abducting UFO. Did you continue to rack up points before your inevitable kidnapping, or get the hell out of there, saving your ball but ignoring big rewards? There was huge breadth to the gameplay, including a two-player footie-themed face-off. There was more going on in *Flipnic* than a thousand half-arsed 'urban' games or generic cartoon platformers.

But people didn't care, because it was pinball, and precious few people play pinball now. But despite all this, we'd still like another really good pinballer – yet we know, deep down, we're not going to get one. And that's a real shame, basically.

EMAIL PSM3 @
Want to champion a game here? Let us know.
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

PlayStation 2 Top 20

This month's big retail winners and losers

01	(02)	FIFA 07	EA	Reviewed PSM80 84%
02	(04)	Pro Evolution Soccer 6		Reviewed PSM83 91%
03	(01)	Need For Speed Carbon	EA	Reviewed PSM82 82%
04	(12)	The Sims 2: Pets	EA	Reviewed PSM82 53%
05	(03)	Call Of Duty 3	Activision	Reviewed PSM82 88%
06	(05)	Smackdown 2007	THQ	Reviewed PSM82 80%
07	(07)	Millionaire: Party Edition	Eidos	Reviewed PSM82 61%
08	(20)	Tiger Woods 07	EA	Reviewed PSM83 80%
09	(13)	Tony Hawk's Project 8	Activision	Reviewed PSM83 74%
10	(10)	Lego Star Wars 2	Eidos	Reviewed PSM82 91%
11	(16)	Buzz: Junior Jungle Party	Sony	Reviewed PSM80 68%
12	(09)	Scarface		Reviewed PSM81 89%
13	(18)	EA Cricket 2007	EA	Reviewed PSM83 79%
14	(06)	Happy Feet	Midway	Reviewed PSM82 60%
15	(11)	Guitar Hero 2	Red Octane	Reviewed PSM82 92%
16	(14)	Buzz: The Sports Quiz	Sony	Reviewed PSM81 69%
17	NEW	Destroy All Humans 2	THQ	Reviewed PSM82 73%
18	NEW	Rayman Raving Rabbids	Ubisoft	Reviewed PSM84 60%
19	(19)	Flushed Away	D3P	Reviewed N/A
20	(17)	Eragon	VU Games	Reviewed PSM83 70%

Get your tin hats on

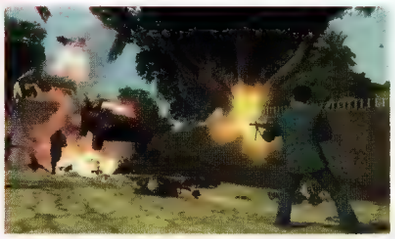
Ollie? Who's Ollie?

Give me fish, punk!

Want it?
Tick it!

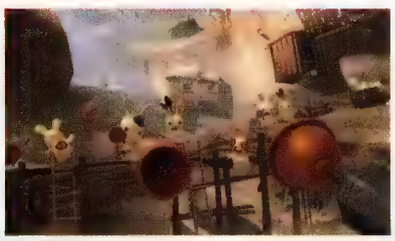
Low evolution

So although *Pro Evo* remains superior, this post-Xmas chart demonstrates that *FIFA* still has the edge, sales-wise. Which is wrong, but there we are.



Scarfacing facts

Scarface continues to do well, which is testament to PS2 gamers' love of movie remakes, violence and swearing. And drugs. Well, hopefully not drugs.



Run, rabbids

The limbless Rayman's slightly rubbish set of minigames has sneaked into the charts. Let's hope it sneaks back out again *real* soon.

75,000,000

The number of PS3's to be sold by 2010, according to a posh company called Research and Marketing.

You're playing...

Jamie Cranton
Jamie like his RPGs, and he's still in love with *FF7*.

1 **Kingdom Hearts 2** "A little kiddy, but the plot's good. Some of Square Enix's finest work."
2 **Monster Hunter Freedom** "Much better than *Monster Hunter* – hunt or be hunted."
3 **Final Fantasy 7** "I've been playing it since I was eight. *[Aren't you tired? PSM3]* Epic."

We're playing...

Milford Coppock
Our art dalek enjoys *Guitar Hero 2* lots, but who doesn't?

1 **Guitar Hero 2** "There's nothing I love more than jiggling my fretboard. Mmm."
2 **MotorStorm** "More mucky than my special mudbath nights.
3 **Call Of Duty 3** "Reminds me of my army days. Oh, wait, I was never in the army. Still, the best *Call Of Duty* yet."

They're playing...

Martin Kenwright
The CEO of Evolution likes *Guitar Hero 2*, and his own games

1 **Guitar Hero 2** "Just love the epic finale that is Skynrd's Freebird."
2 **Pursuit Force: Extreme Justice** "The best game on PSP is back! You just wait for it."
3 **MotorStorm (online)** "So far we're the only people who've played *MotorStorm* online, and it's shaping up nicely."

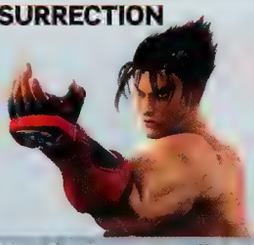
ON THE DISC
Want to see the latest PSP games rated? Go here

PSP Playlist

FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE

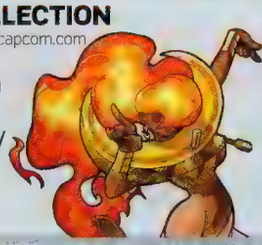
BEAT-'EM-UPS

TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION
Pub Sony | **Dev** Namco
Web tekken.net
"Grabs you and doesn't let go. This is how all handheld scrapping should be. An essential buy."
PSM3 Rating 89%



71%

POWER STONE COLLECTION
Pub Capcom | **Dev** Capcom | **Web** capcom.com
"Slaps a broad smile on your face. Perfectly suited to handheld play and will brighten up anyone's day."
PSM3 Rating 86%



74%

DEF JAM: THE TAKEOVER
Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **Web** ea.com
"Where other fighting games feel floaty, every punch and stomp carries weight. Brutal."
PSM3 Rating 85%

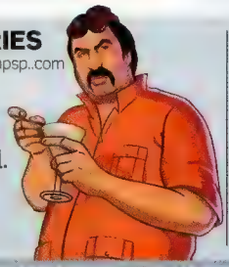
84%

85%

77%

ACTION

GTA: VICE CITY STORIES
Pub Rockstar | **Dev** Rockstar | **Web** gtapsp..com
"The miracle of playing such a big game on PSP makes *VCS* pretty special. The system's best yet."
PSM3 Rating 91%



72%

GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES
Pub Rockstar | **Dev** Rockstar | **Web** gtapsp..com
"Forehead-poppingly frustrating at times, *Liberty City Stories* is still a colossal beaut of a game."
PSM3 Rating 90%

70%

SYPHON FILTER: DARK MIRROR
Pub SCEE | **Dev** SCEA | **Web** playstation.com
"*Dark Mirror* lets you attack missions and enemy grunts in a way that suits your style – which makes it fun."
PSM3 Rating 88%

72%

75%

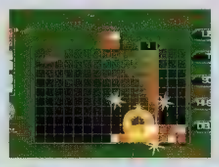
70%

PUZZLERS

LOCOROCO
Pub SCEI | **Dev** SCEI
Web locoroco.com
"Guide your grinning sphere through various lands. Odd, entertaining and the happiest game there is on PSP."
PSM3 Rating 93%

84%

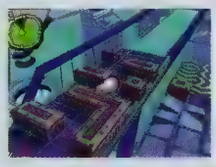
LUMINES 2
Pub Buena Vista | **Dev** Q | **Web** lumines2thegame.com
"Games like this are what your PSP was made for. Hypnotic puzzle action that you'll play for ages. Just great."
PSM3 Rating 92%



72%

78%

MERCURY MELTDOWN
Pub Ignition | **Dev** Awesome Studios | **Web** ignitionent.com
"Terrific fun, offering plenty of levels that are totally bewildering. A superior head-scratcher."
PSM3 Rating 82%



78%

77%

85%

SPORTS

VIRTUA TENNIS WORLD TOUR
Pub Sega | **Dev** Sumo Digital | **Web** sega com
"Design your own player, enter tournaments across the globe, win trophies, earn cash... now that's tennis."
PSM3 Rating 91%

80%

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3
Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Web easports.com/fightnightround3
"Streamlining has taken place, but *Round 3* remains a well-balanced slugfest and deserves the championship belt."
PSM3 Rating 84%

79%

80%

EVERYBODY'S GOLF
Pub SCEI | **Dev** SCEI
Web playstation.com
"Your caddy squeaks 'nice shot' and your golfer does a backflip. It's all very charming."
PSM3 Rating 81%

72%

81%

That's a rap

Games that bling it up big-stylee, or something

RAP AND RUMBLE

Def Jam: Fight For New York
Pub Electronic Arts | **Dev** EA
Web www.ea.com
By far the best use of hip-hop in any game yet, we still find great joy in watching Busta Rhymes and Method Man kicking seven shades of bling out of Ludacris. Fun for all the family. More or less.
PSM3 Rating 86%

CENT OFF

50 Cent: Bulletproof
Pub Vivendi | **Dev** Genuine Games
Web 50centbulletproof.com
And here's how not to do rap in games. Thrill as Fiddy wanders around shooting wave after wave of generic baddies, and swoon at the wondrous decision to not include a lock-on, meaning your aim is as wild as a drunk darts player. Cack.
PSM3 Rating 48%

TOTAL RAP

Get On Da Mic
Pub Eidos | **Dev** Artificial Mind
Web eidos.co.uk
Yeah, bee-yatch. *Get On Da Mic* be like *SingStar* but for da rap, innit, bruv. Except it's not, obviously, let down by a fatal flaw – you can just tap the mic in time to the music for easy points-gathering. Oh, and the choice of songs is, ahem, wack.
PSM3 Rating 49%

@ **Disagree with our choices?** Write an explosive mail telling us why you're a complete idiot. Ah, your word bombs to: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "WRONG!"

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Nice Apps

Trick up your console

Axe power

App Guitar Hero 2 V-shaped wireless guitar
Web gameseek.co.uk

The first *Guitar Hero* saw a couple of unofficial axes launched in its wake, and *Guitar Hero 2* has proved no different. Now you can get yourself this fetching new V-shaped beast, in red or blue – and it's wireless, with a range of 50 feet. How you'd see which notes to play 50 feet away from the screen we're not sure – unless someone launches a pair of special *Guitar Hero* binoculars sometime soon – but 800 hours of play from a packet of four batteries can't be too shabby at all. 40 quid seems a bit steep, though – you can buy the game plus the original geetar for that money.

Looking good

App PS2 HDTV player
Web madcatz.com

Got a 1080i telly? Then you might be interested in this – it's the Madcatz Xploder HDTV player for your PlayStation 2. Load the software before you insert your game disc and it'll convert your video signal to lovely hi-definition 1080i/720p/whatever set of numbers. Which is certainly worth having, eh? So now you can enjoy the Hydra battle in *God Of War* in superb-o-vision, for example, shoot people in the face online in *MGS: Subsistence* via 1080i or marvel at the text menus of *Championship Manager* in hi-definition. Maybe not that.

Type clean

App Cordless Mediaboard | **Web** logitech.com

Got a PlayStation 3? No, you haven't, not yet, stop lying. But if you have, this cordless keyboard is just the thing for navigating your way around the PlayStation Network. So sending abusive messages to fellow players over games of *MotorStorm* is made simpler than idiot pie, and there's a mouse pad attached to the side, to make surfing the interweb as easy as it ever can be on a console. A must-have for serious PS3 online jockeys.

In key It's a keyboard for your PS3. Worth having for online.

Early Warning System

Your PlayStation release schedule

Game	Publisher	Out	Format	Want it? Tick it!
Shin Megami Tensai: Digital Devil Saga 2	Ghostlight	Feb 16	PS2	☐
God Hand	Capcom	Feb 16	PS2	☐
Test Drive Unlimited	Atari	Feb 16	PS2	☐
Robin Hood's Quest	Oxygen	Feb 16	PS2	☐
World Of Pool	Ghostlight	Feb 16	PSP	☐
Final Fantasy XII	Square Enix	Feb 23	PS2	☐
World War 2: Battle Over Europe	Midas	Feb 23	PS2	☐
Capcom Classics Collection Vol 2	Capcom	Feb 23	PS2	☐
Samurai Warriors 2: Empires	Koei	Feb 23	PS2	☐
World Championship Poker 2	Oxygen	Feb 23	PS2	☐
Ghost Rider	2K Games	Feb 23	PS2	☐
EA Replay	EA	Feb 23	PSP	☐
Activision Hits Remixed	Activision	Feb 23	PSP	☐
The Hustle: Detroit Streets	Deep Silver	Feb 23	PSP	☐
Hot PXL	Atari	Feb 23	PSP	☐
Sid Meier's Pirates	2K Games	Feb 23	PSP	☐
Hammy Goes Nuts	Activision	Feb 23	PSP	☐
Rainbow Six Vegas	Ubisoft	Feb 23	PSP	☐
PS3 UK Launch	Sony	Mar 23	PS2	☐
God Of War 2	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Call Of Duty 3	Activision	March	PS3	☐
Ridge Racer 7	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Genji: Days Of The Blade	Sony	March	PS3	☐
MotorStorm	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Haze	Ubisoft	TBC	PS3	☐
Resistance: Fall Of Man	Sony	March	PS3	☐
Fight Night Round 3	EA	March	PS3	☐
Need For Speed: Carbon	EA	March	PS3	☐
Sno Cross 2	Oxygen	March 2	PS2	☐
Hard Rock Casino	Crave	March 16	PS2	☐
Capcom Puzzle World	Capcom	March 16	PSP	☐
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Ubisoft	March 23	PS2	☐
Brian Lara Cricket 2007	Codemasters	March 23	PS2	☐
Dungeons And Dragons Tactics	Atari	March 23	PSP	☐
Pimp My Ride	Activision	March 30	PS2	☐
King Of Fighters XI	Ignition	March 30	PS2	☐
Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops	Konami	March 30	PSP	☐
Coded Arms Contagion	Konami	March 30	PSP	☐
Dave Mirra BMX Challenge	Acclaim	April 20	PSP	☐
Rogue Galaxy	Sony	June 5	PS2	☐

Test Drive Unlimited

Head over to page 58 for our review of *Test Drive*, the super in-depth racing sim, crammed onto your PS2. Better than *GT4*? Go see for yourselves.

MotorStorm

Looking likely to be the best of PS3's launch titles, *MotorStorm* is the only game we've ever seen that actually makes mud *sexy*. Or is that just us?

Brian Lara Cricket 2007

When England do well in sports, said linked games tend to fly off the shelves. After the Ashes, however, who knows what'll happen for *Lara*? Gulp.

eBay Going, Going, Gone PlayStation auction action

Prince Of Persia statue

Yes, for only the most discerning of collectors comes this *six feet tall* statue of the Prince Of Persia, circa *Warrior Within* period by the looks of things. It'd slot in nicely next to that huge cutout of Sarah Michelle Gellar you've got by the stereo. Apparently, it's "only going up in value", so that it got no bids is madness. *Madness.*

Sold Nah **Original Price** $225
Profit Zilch

Silent Hill book

The Lost Memories book, that is, which offers such aceness as a recap of the entire storyline up to the third game, a guide to all the beasties from the first three titles,

profiles of each characters and a family tree showing how they all link together. There's a walkthrough to *Silent Hill 3*, too. OK, it's all in Japanese, but it's still ultra-collectible. Mmm.

Sold $280 **Original Price** $60
Profit $220

Metal Gear action figures

Nice. Six boxed figures, comprising Sniper Wolf, Psycho Mantis, Ninja, Liquid Snake, Vulcan Raven and Meryl Silverburgh. These are certainly nice little collectibles – and not 'toys' or 'dolls', no matter what your girlfriend might say – and we'd gladly have them cluttering up our houses, despite "minor nicks to the cardboard". Is it time for *Metal Gear Solid 4* yet? Oh, come on, we've been waiting *ages*.

Sold $61 **Original Price** $27
Profit $34

ON THE DISC
See what PS3 is capable of on your free DVD

PS3 Playlist

FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE

TOP THREE

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Insomniac
Web us.playstation.com
"An incredibly slick, exciting PS3 showcase. A beautiful vision of an alien-infested Britain. Terrific stuff."
PSM3 Rating 90%

CALL OF DUTY 3
Pub Activision | **Dev** Trayarch
Web callofduty.com
"The only additions PS3 offers above the PS2 game is shinier, sharper graphics. Still, the next-gen starts here."
PSM3 Rating 89%

MOTORSTORM
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Evolution
Web motorstorm.com
"Tough, dynamic racing. A blistering thrill ride that makes good on all of PlayStation 3's promises."
PSM3 Rating 88%

FOUR TO SIX

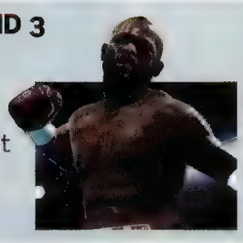
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07
Pub | EA | **Dev** EA
Web easports.com/tigerwoods07
"Finally, instead of piling on the modes and features, we get a visibly superior Tiger game. Great work."
PSM3 Rating 82%

TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8
Pub | Activision | **Dev** Neversoft
Web tonyhawksproject8.com
"A solid, back-to-basics return to the glory days of the Hawk. He's still delivering the goods."
PSM3 Rating 80%

RIDGE RACER 7
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Namco
Web ridgeracer7.net
"The ultimate *Ridge* – glowing with power and delivering exactly want you want."
PSM3 Rating 80%

SEVEN TO NINE

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3
Pub | EA | **Dev** EA
Web easports.com
"Fundamentally no different to the PlayStation 2 game, but worth playing if you're new to *Round 3*."
PSM3 Rating 78%



GENJI: DAYS OF THE BLADE
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Game Republic
Web us.playstation.com
"*Genji* isn't rubbish, but it's not that good either. And that's not what you're getting a PS3 for, is it?"
PSM3 Rating 60%

NEED FOR SPEED: CARBON
Pub | EA | **Dev** EA
Web ea.com/nfs/carbon
"Why are the graphics like this? There are jaggies everywhere. The PS2 version is superior."
PSM3 Rating 58%

THE DREGS

FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES
Pub | Sega | **Dev** Pseudo Interactive
Web sega.com
"A budget PS2 game wearing its big sister's high-definition make-up. Makes the veins in our forehead bulge."
PSM3 Rating 36%

GUNDAM: TARGET IN SIGHT
Pub | Namco | **Dev** Namco Bandai
Web gundamofficial.com
"A disgrace on pretty much every level and one of the worst games we've played in ages – a dismal advert for PS3."
PSM3 Rating 28%

PSM3'S MOST WANTED

ARMY OF TWO
Pub | EA | **Dev** EA
Web ea.com/armyoftwo
If *Army Of Two* redefines AI the way it promises, it should be very special stuff indeed.

The price £425
Exactly as we expected, then – £425 on launch. But bear in mind that you'll also be needing a second pad (around £35) and at least one game – so that'll be another £50. So remember to save a bit more cash than the basic £425, or you'll be sorry. Then, of course, you might want to think about buying a hi-def telly...

HDMI support
Sony are playing PS3's HDMI fiddle loud. This all-digital port is now on both models of PS3 and delivers True HD sound and full HD 1080p pictures – both things that 360 can't do. Question is, given that you can't really see the difference –at least, not yet – does anyone care?

True HD sound
Dolby Digital 5.1, and EX 6.1 and 7.1 sound great but PS3 can do better. It supports Dolby True HD too – the format that's a copy of a movie's cinema soundtrack. DTHD amps are getting cheaper all the time but are still hundreds.

Motion-sensitive Sixaxis controller
The new PS3 pad doesn't vibrate. Instead it can sense tilt and movement. Want to turn a corner? Just twist the pad. We can confirm that it's super-light – even lighter than the PS2 pad despite its extra innards – and it works great.

60Gb model only?
Will the 20Gb unit go on sale in the UK? Not at first, no. Come March 23, you'll only be able to buy the more expensive 60Gb PlayStation 3, although Sony haven't ruled out releasing the trimmed-down, cheaper model at a later date. Although, if we're honest, we'd be amazed if it ever actually saw the light of a British dawn.

Blu-ray
PS3 plays Blu-ray discs – the brand new hi-def movie format that kicks DVD's ass. The very first (£1000) Blu-ray players are on sale now, or you can wait for PS3 in March.

The launch date March 23
So, finally, we know when PlayStation 3 will launch across Europe. March 23 is the day, so soon – tantalisingly soon – we'll be able to join Japan and the States in indulging in some PS3-love. Launch titles include *Call Of Duty 3*, *Resistance: Fall Of Man*, *MotorStorm*, *Gundam* and more, with the likes of *Def Jam Icon* later in the 'launch window'.

@ Got a PS3 question? Then we'll answer it. Send your next-gen console queries to: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "PS3 question!"

Now Showing

Movies for your console

DVD New on DVD

Borat

Director Larry Charles | **Starring** Sacha Baron Cohen, Ken Davitian, Pamela Anderson

The naked wrestling scene continues to scar our every waking moment... the wobbling flesh... the hairy arse... the man bits... aaargh... Anyway, yes, you can now relive this most memorable of cinematic moments on DVD. The horror...

UMD selection

Open Season

Director Roger Allers | **Starring** Martin Lawrence, Ashton Kutcher, Jon Favreau, Gary Sinese

Last month, Little Man was "one of the only movies out this month". In turn, Open Season is the *only* movie out on UMD this month. Uh-oh. At least its better than Little Man. Anyway, this is an animated film about a bear and a deer forming an alliance during the dreaded hunting season, and is perfectly watchable, although it's certainly no Shrek. Next month in this space: the sound of us shouting desolately into the void.

Blu-ray choice

The Replacement Killers

Director: Antoine Fuqua | **Starring** Chow Yun-Fat, Mira Sorvino, Michael Rooker, Kenneth Tsang

If there's a better use for the sheer power of Blu-ray than spattering really, really hi-def blood all over your screen, then we've yet to think of it. So welcome the Replacement Killers, a movie that does have a plot, but is basically about Asian gangsters who don't like each other very much shooting one another in the face for fun and profit. There are better mobster flicks, certainly – but none of them are on Blu-ray yet, so get this in.

PSM3 Tunes Where you get great music for free

Whites Only Party
The Dears

Ooh, music with a message. Forget the politicising, though, this is excellent, and certainly rather more jaunty than much of the previous Dears output.

Get it: thedears.org

I Got A Feeling (Just 19)
Eagles Of Death Metal

Thumping glam rock that hits like a brick to the face. But in a good way.

Get it: eaglesofdeathmetal.com

In Charge
Uffie

Imagine if Bjork took up rapping. Now imagine that, but good. You're there. Rather fine.

Get it: myspace.com/uffie

California
Dr Dog

Dr Dog are just off a tour supporting The Magic Numbers, which probably tells you enough about whether you'll like California or not. Gentle, swooning music. Very nice.

Get it: drdogmusic.com

Cute
:(

Although it sounds like typical US emo (despite being Scottish), it's overlayed with keyboards that sound like the tune to some ancient Spectrum game like *Jet Set Willy*. Ask your dad, eh? Bizarre.

Get it: myspace.com/colonopenbracket.

Freight Elevator
The Rogers Sisters

An older track, but it couldn't be more fashionable if it tried, sounding like the Klaxons, the Rapture and all of those bands. And a bit like Talking Heads. Go and ask your dad, again.

Get it: myspace.com/therogerssisters

@ Tune-up Send us your music links and we'll stick 'em in the mag. Email: [redacted] Subject line: "Music!"

Object of Desire

You might not be able to afford it, but it's still gorgeous

Nikon D200 digicam Say "Wensleydale"

When you get a PS3, you'll be able to do all sorts of exciting things with it, and we don't just mean playing games. We also mean playing your own MP3s on it, or creating your own photo galleries. And to do that, you'll need a digital camera – so why not try the Nikon D200?

As you'd guess from the price tag, the D200 is pretty damn powerful. It's 10.2 megapixels and the ability to select "individual focus areas" thanks to the "newly developed 11-area AF system". It's also got "3D Colour Matrix Metering 2" and the "newly developed high-energy EN-EL3e rechargable lithium-ion battery". We'll be honest with you, we haven't the foggiest what any of that means, but it certainly sounds good and, apparently, means the camera "does its jobs 200%". Except that's not possible, obviously.

So – a flash camera with ludicrous amounts of technical gubbins that you'll never understand, but will feel like The Man for owning. Smart.

Tech Spec

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MY FIRST OFFICE PARTY 0909 925 6025
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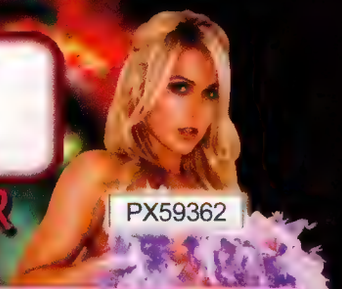

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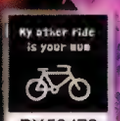

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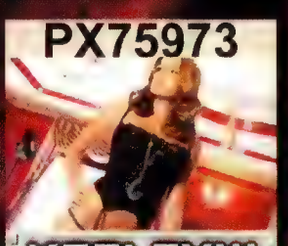

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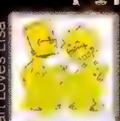

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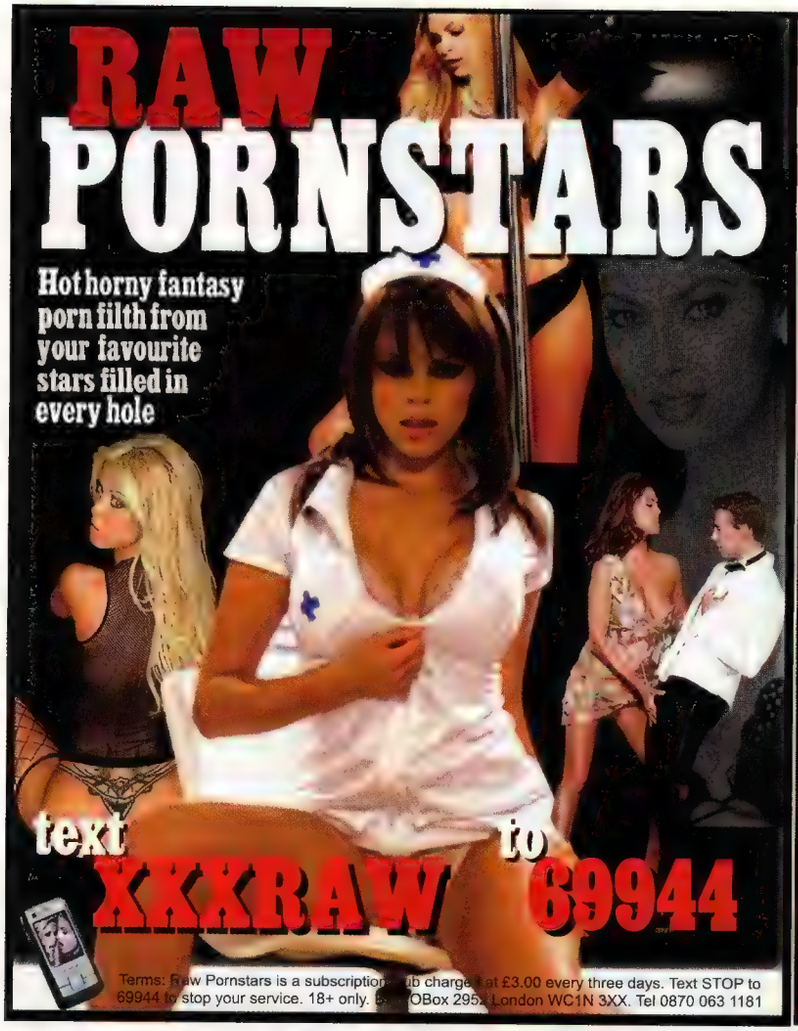
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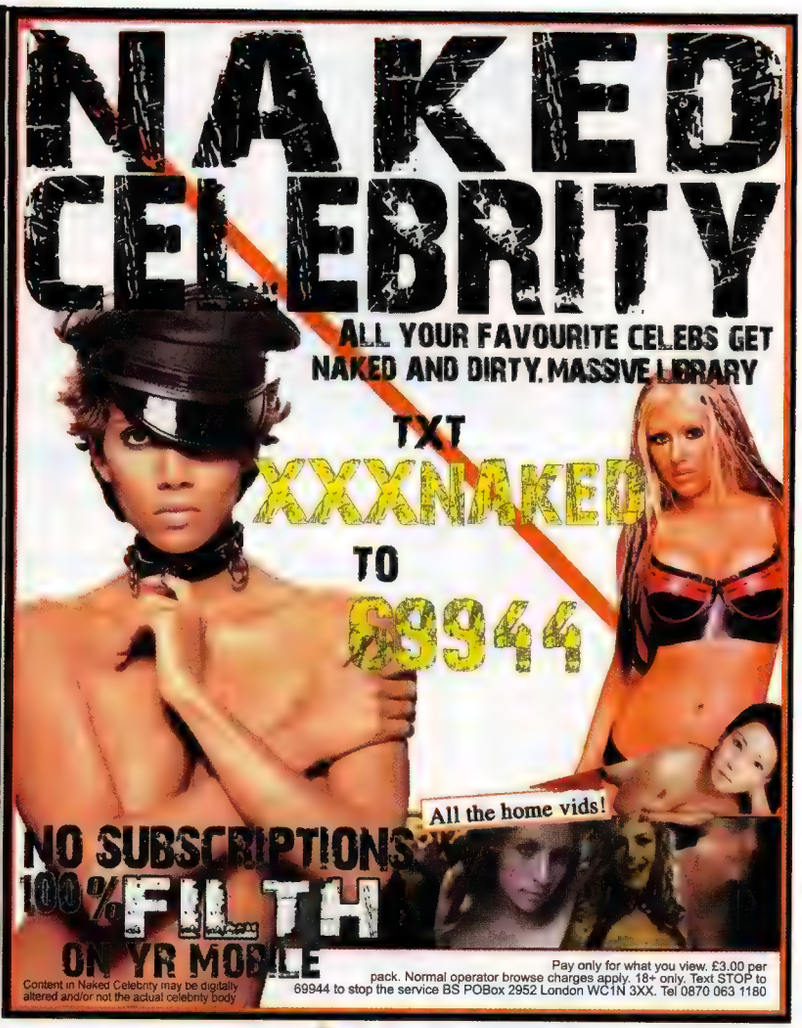
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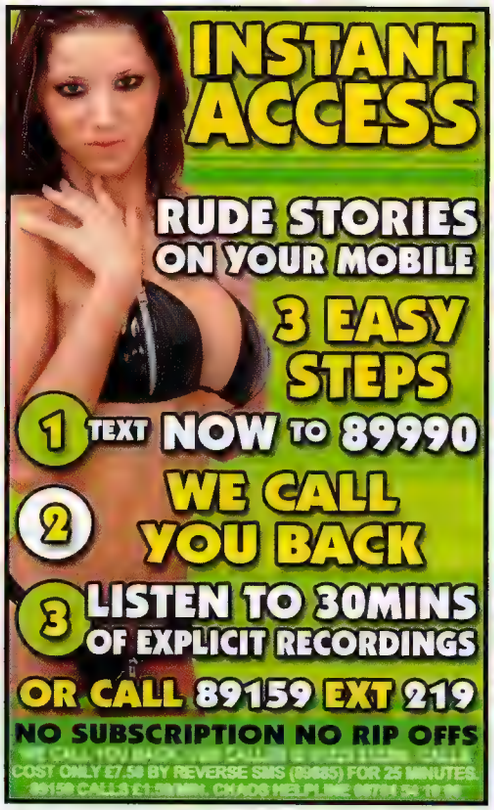
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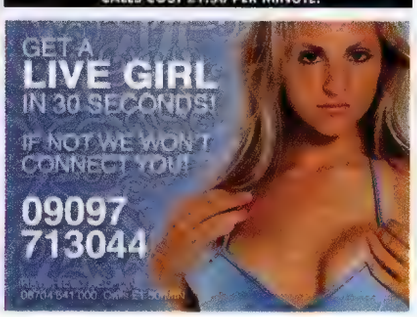

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5 things to remember this month

Stranglehold lets you destroy everything
"Interaction like you've never seen before."
page 20

Every dog needs a master, even in *Okami*
"When you shrink, Issun – a tiny god – rides on your back."
page 88

GT HD Concept looks damn swish
"Gorgeously smooth HD looks, plus Ferrari. So just how excited should you be?"
page 80

World War III will be won in the skies, says *Frontlines*
"Drones spy on enemies or act as miniaturised air support."
page 47

Gaming on the bog is the future, maybe
"There are PSP's wired into the doors so you can play if you're on a sit-down job."
page 100

Next issue on sale
Thursday March 15
1 PS3 is here! Games rated + hardware secrets revealed
2 God Of War 2 – the ultimate review. Is this PlayStation 2's best game?
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ABC PSM3 35,993
Jan to June 2006

Game, set and (love) match...

Can you help our new friend Bjorn find love on the net? It's best if you like tennis...

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MySpace URL:
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Bjorn Slazenger's Blurbs

About me:
Hello. I'm Boris Slazenger and I love tennis. I was born inside a computer, as a created character in Virtua Tennis 3 on PlayStation 3. I never knew my father, but I do know that he was particularly cruel when it came to setting my facial proportions and hairstyle.

I will never forgive him.

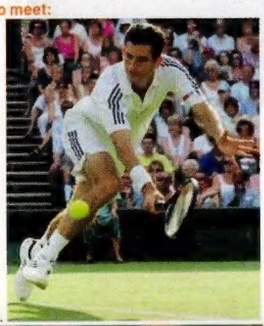
My whole life is a series of tournaments and absurd mini-games. Every day I wake up, dodge giant tennis balls, collect fruit and knock down bowling pins. I don't know why, but it seems to make me stronger.

Sometimes I enter tournaments with my heroes, like Roger Federer and Tim Henman. Sometimes I play with the girls, but they never speak to me after the game. I tried to hug Martina Hingis, but fell straight through her. I guess her collision detection isn't too good. I'm so lonely.

General	Playing tennis, reading about tennis, thinking about tennis.
Music	Tennis.
Films	Tennis.
Television	Tennis.
Books	Agassi: The Fall and Rise of the Enfant Terrible of Tennis, Ich bin ein Spieler: Das Leben des Boris Becker, anything about tennis.
Heroes	Andre Agassi, Roger Federer, John McEnroe, Pieter Aldrich, Boris Becker, Roger Taylor

Status:	Single
Zodiac Sign:	Taurus
Children:	I don't want kids

Who I'd like to meet:



Tennis players.

HELP BJORN!

Please visit **http://www.myspace.com/bjornslazenger** to send our quite real pretend chum Bjorn your messages of support. Just don't send him anything too sexy, because he tends to struggle with stuff that doesn't involve serves, volleys or collecting pieces of fruit on a giant travelator. Other user-created game characters, perfectly welcome.

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